



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

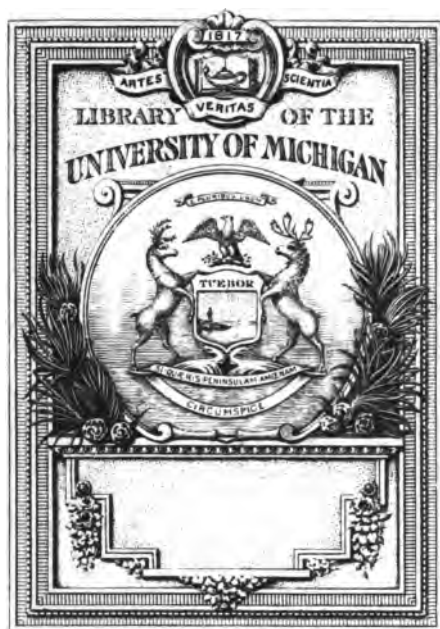
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

A

726,269

DUPL



**ESSAYS ON
GERMAN LITERATURE**

HJALMAR HJORTH BOYESEN'S WORKS.

GOETHE AND SCHILLER. Their Lives and Works; with a
Commentary on "Faust." \$2.00.

GUNNAR. Paper, 50 cents; cloth, \$1.25.

TALES FROM TWO HEMISPHERES \$1.00.

A NORSEMAN'S PILGRIMAGE. \$1.50.

FALCONBERG. A Novel. Illustrated, \$1.50.

QUEEN TITANIA. \$1.00.

ILKA ON THE HILL-TOP AND OTHER TALES. \$1.00.

THE STORY OF NORWAY. (Stories of the Nations' Series.)
Illustrated, \$1.50.

A DAUGHTER OF THE PHILISTINES. Paper, 50 cents;
cloth, \$1.00.

THE LIGHT OF HER COUNTENANCE. Paper, 50 cents;
cloth, 75 cents.

VAGABOND TALES. \$1.25.

THE MAMMON OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. Cloth, \$1.25.

IDYLS OF NORWAY AND OTHER POEMS. \$1.25.

THE MODERN VIKINGS: Stories of Life and Sport in the North-
land. Illustrated, \$2.00.

AGAINST HEAVY ODDS. (A Story for Boys.) Illustrated, \$1.00.

**ESSAYS ON
GERMAN LITERATURE**

15229

BY

HJALMAR HJORTH BOYESEN

PROFESSOR OF THE GERMANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES IN
COLUMBIA COLLEGE

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1892

CONTENTS

GOETHE

	PAGE
I. THE LIFE AND WORKS OF GOETHE, . . .	3
II. GOETHE AND CARLYLE, ...	58
III. THE ENGLISH ESTIMATE OF GOETHE, . . .	85
IV. SOME ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GOETHE, . .	100
V. SERMONS FROM GOETHE, ...	129
VI. GOETHE'S RELATIONS TO WOMEN, ...	148

SCHILLER

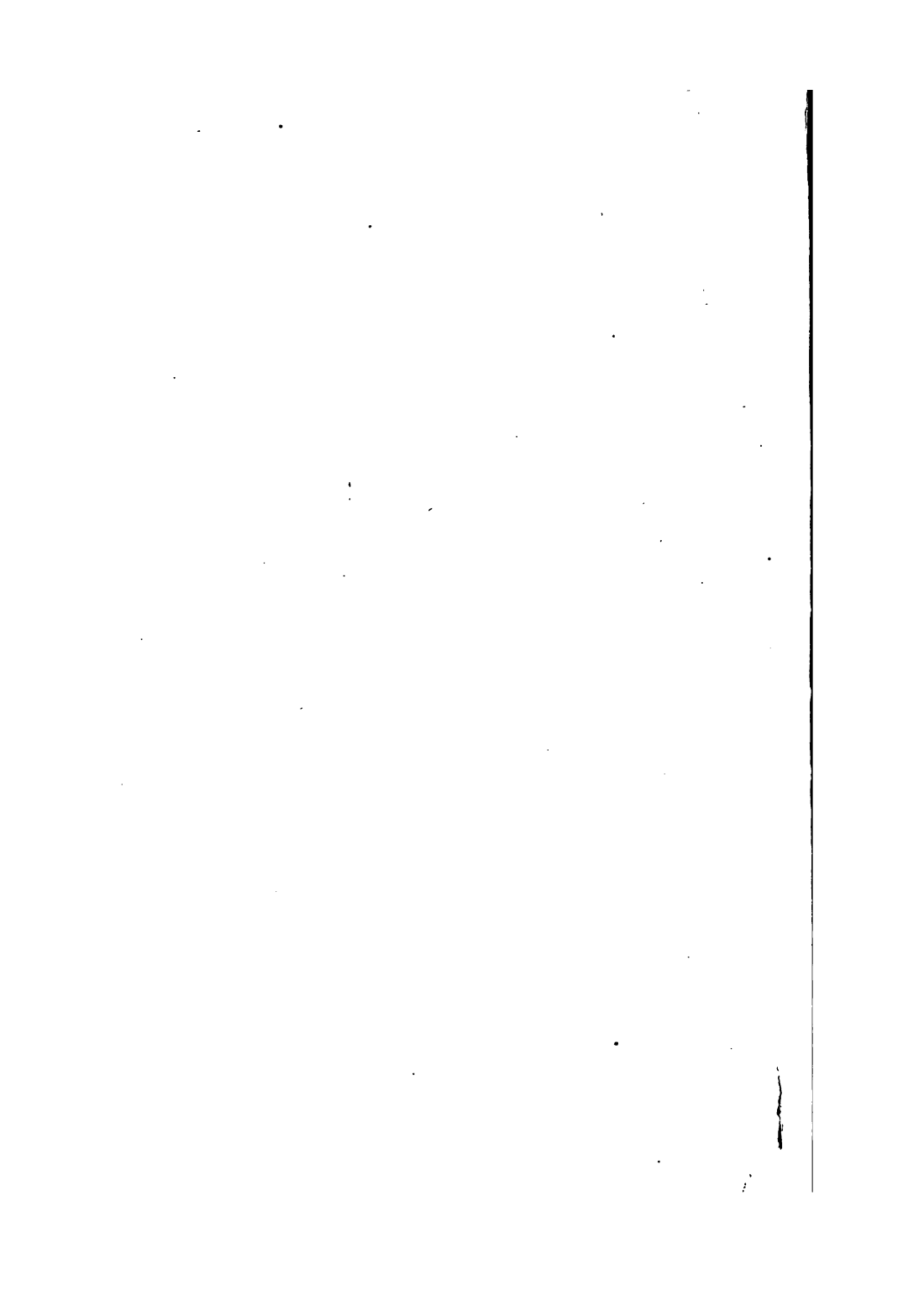
VII. THE LIFE AND WORKS OF SCHILLER, . . .	177
--	-----

THE GERMAN NOVEL

VIII. THE EVOLUTION OF THE GERMAN NOVEL, . .	213
IX. STUDIES OF THE GERMAN NOVEL, ...	240
X. "CARMEN SYLVA,"	264

THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL IN GERMANY

XI. SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE GERMAN ROMANTIC SCHOOL, ...	281
XII. NOVALIS AND THE BLUE FLOWER, ...	307
XIII. LITERARY ASPECTS OF THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL,	332



GOETHE

I

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF GOETHE

IT is told of the philosopher Hegel that he once complained because so few understood his writings. "Of all living men," he said, "there is but one who has understood me; and," he added, after a moment's reflection, "he misunderstood me." The common judgment of a man who spoke thus would be that he was himself at fault, that his utterance was needlessly obscure, since it failed to appeal to ordinary human intelligence. In Hegel's case such a judgment would not have been far wrong. German philosophers, as a rule, cultivate involved obscurity of diction, and perhaps even pride themselves on their unintelligibility.

But for all that it is not to be denied that there is a region of thought which lies beyond the range of the ordinary intellect, and which is none the less exalted and beautiful because of its inaccessibility to the multitude. The fact that you or I do not see anything in works of this or that poet, does not, of necessity, prove that there is nothing in them. That which you or I do not understand is not on that ac-

count unintelligible. If the second part of "Faust" fails to convey any meaning to the ordinary omniscient critic of the daily papers, it is generally supposed that the second part of "Faust" stands thereby condemned. That Goethe has opened a new realm of thought to which even a college degree is not necessarily a passport, that he has in "Faust" expounded a deep philosophy of life, for the comprehension of which a more than ordinary largeness of vision and grasp of intellect are required, is scarcely dreamed of by the herd of shallow, nimble-witted critics who pat him kindly on the shoulder and compare him blandly with Byron, Coleridge, and Wordsworth.

Of English writers only Carlyle seems to have had an adequate conception of Goethe's greatness, although he, too, was certainly at variance with the fundamental principles which underlay his hero's life and poetic activity. That he unconsciously distorted the meaning of "Faust" is very obvious to any student of Goethe who reads his essay on "Helena."

It was the direct purpose of Goethe to be the intellectual deliverer of his age, as he distinctly avowed to Eckermann when he said that the name which he would prefer to all others was "Befreier." The tendency of his life and his writings, after his return from Italy, is all in the same direction. They all teach, even where no didactic purpose is apparent, that liberty is attainable, not by defiance of moral and physical law, but by obedience to it; that

happiness is to be found only in a cheerful acquiescence in the rationality of existence. In this lesson there is deliverance to him who properly estimates and apprehends it. Thus barrenly stated it sounds commonplace enough to us of the nineteenth century; but it is largely due to Goethe's influence that it has become so generally accepted. Before "Faust" was written there were few who would have been able to defend such a proposition, even though they might profess to accept it.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born in Frankfort-on-the-Main, August 28, 1749. His family, a few generations back, had been plain artisans, and had by dint of talent and energy risen to prosperity and social importance. Goethe's father had inherited a respectable fortune, enjoyed a good education, and had travelled considerably in his own country and in Italy. He was a stern and methodical man, rigidly upright, impatient of all irregularities, and somewhat pedantic in his habits and opinions. His bearing was dignified, his disposition despotic. At the age of thirty-eight he married Katharine Elizabeth, daughter of the Magistrate Textor, and bought the title of Imperial Counsellor. There were no duties connected with this office, but it conferred a social rank which in those days was highly prized. The young wife whom the counsellor installed in his spacious house in the Hirschgraben was a contrast to him in almost everything. She was genial and full of wholesome mirth. Her culture was probably moderate enough, but she possessed a

nature which compensated for all deficiencies of education. An exuberant fancy, inexhaustible good-humor, and an ever-ready mother-wit made her the most delightful of companions; and no one valued more highly her many charming gifts than her son Johann Wolfgang. As he grew out of infancy she became his playmate and friend, and the confidant of his boyish sorrows. She listened with delight to his improvisations, and secretly took his part in his occasional rebellion against the paternal authority.

In the invention of stories she was an expert; her serials ran from evening to evening, and were continued *ad libitum*. Goethe and his sister Cornelia would then tell them at second-hand to their Grandmother Textor, indulging in conjectures as to the future course of events, and expressing their hopes for a satisfactory ending. These speculations Grandmother Textor would again confide to her daughter, who would then take care to make Wolfgang's conjectures come true, meting out the most gratifying justice to the villain, and to suffering virtue an ample reward.

Frau Aja, as she was called, became in later years, as her son's fame grew, a character in German literature. His friends became her friends, and no one of any consequence passed through the city of Frankfort without stopping to pay his respects to her. Her cheerful view of life, her absolute refusal to entertain gloomy subjects, her easy-going desire to please and be pleased made her a universal favor-

ite. Previous to her death (1808) she arranged the minutest details of her funeral, even warning her servants not to skimp the raisins in the cake, with which the guests were to be regaled. Receiving an invitation to a party, as she felt the approach of death, she returned the answer that "Madame Goethe could not come, because she was, just then, engaged in dying."

Goethe's father seems to have inspired most biographers with ill-will. And yet he was, though less lovable than his wife, a well-endowed, conscientious, and estimable man. That he was a sterner disciplinarian than his wife (who herself declared that she was unfit to educate anybody) was a fortunate circumstance for his children. For Frau Aja systematically spoiled them, indulging all their whims, and granting all their wishes, if they would only be pleasant and not cry. There is plenty of evidence that the counsellor had a great ambition for his son, and took a deep interest in his education. He corrected and criticised his drawings, directed his studies, watched his progress, and expressed his displeasure when the boy failed to come up to his expectation. Fortunate is the boy who has such a father, even though he may not have the sagacity to appreciate him. And doubly needed were the restraining force, the insistence upon duty, and the occasional severity of the Counsellor Goethe, as a counterpoise to the utter laxity of the pleasure-loving mother.

Goethe's well-known views concerning his ances-

try show that he valued in maturer years both his paternal and maternal heredity :

“ Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur,
Des Lebens ernstes Führen ;
Vom Mütterchen die Frohnatur
Die Lust zu fabuliren,”

which Professor J. T. Blackie translates thus :

“ My goodly frame and earnest soul
I from my sire inherit ;
My happy heart and glib discourse
Was my brave mother's merit.”

Goethe was a precocious child, richly endowed physically and mentally. He absorbed knowledge spontaneously and without effort. His fancy, too, was active, and he took delight in relating marvelous tales, which he himself invented, to a company of admiring friends. The two fairy tales, “The New Paris” and “The New Melusine,” which he reprinted in a somewhat improved shape in his autobiography, belong to this period.

A charming anecdote is related *apropos* of his fondness for Klopstock's biblical epic, “The Messiah.” Frau Aja had surreptitiously borrowed this book, and went about with it in her pocket, because her husband disapproved of Klopstock's wild and rebellious rhapsodies. Goethe and his younger sister Cornelia, sharing their mother's predilections, therefore committed the precious verses to memory, and amused themselves with personating the enraged

Satan and his subordinate fiends. Standing on chairs in the nursery they would hurl the most delightfully polysyllabic maledictions at each other. One Saturday evening, while their father was receiving a professional visit from his barber, the two children (who were always hushed and subdued in his presence) were seated behind the stove whispering sonorous curses in each other's ears. Cornelia, however, carried away by the impetus of her inspiration, forgot the father's presence, and spoke with increasing violence :

"Help me! help! I implore thee, and if thou demand'st it
Worship thee, outcast! Thou monster and black malefactor!

Help me! I suffer the torments of death, the eternal avenger!" etc.

The barber, frightened out of his wits by such extraordinary language, poured the soap-lather over the counsellor's bosom. The culprits were summoned for trial, and Klopstock was placed upon the *index expurgatorius*.

In 1765 Goethe was sent to the University of Leipsic, where he was matriculated as a student of law. It was his father's wish that he should fit himself for the legal profession, and in time inherit the paternal dignity as a counsellor and honored citizen of the free city of Frankfort. Agreeably to this plan Goethe attended lectures on logic and Roman law, but soon grew so tired of these barren disciplines that he absented himself from lect-

ures altogether. A brief and innocent love affair with Käthchen Schönkopf, the daughter of the landlord with whom he took his dinners, may have tended to distract his attention. Loving your landlord's daughter is as a rule antagonistic both to law and logic. A serious illness further interfered with his studies, and in 1768, after three years' sojourn at the university, Goethe was called home to Frankfurt, where he spent two years, regaining his health.

Goethe's sojourn in Leipsic brought him into contact with the French rococo culture, which then predominated in all the higher circles of Germany. The periwig period, with its elaborately artificial manners and "elegant" sentiments, had set its monuments in German literature as in that of France. Gottsched, who was a servile imitator of the authors of the age of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., was a professor in Leipsic while Goethe was there, though his influence as a dictator of taste was greatly on the wane. Nevertheless the tone of Leipsic society remained French, and it was natural that an impressible young poet like Goethe should assume the tone of his surroundings. We therefore see that his first literary efforts, a volume of poems published as texts for musical compositions, bear the rococo stamp and are as frivolous and full of artificial conceits, as if they had been addressed to one of the beauties of Versailles. Poetry was then believed to be a graceful ingenuity of language and sparkling play of fancy. Nature was banished, as rude and uncouth, or, if admitted, laced in a very

tight corset, rouged and powdered, befrilled and be-dizened, until it could pass muster in the "elegant" *salons* of the period. Goethe's youthful drama, "The Accomplices" ("Die Mitschuldigen"), is in this strain, and is radically alien to German morality.

In April, 1770, Goethe was sufficiently restored to health to resume his studies. He did not, however, return to Leipsic, but went to the University of Strassburg, where the teaching of the law was held to be very efficient. The city of Strassburg was then, as it has ever since remained, essentially German, though there was an infusion of Gallic life from the French officials who governed the conquered province. It was here, where Gallic and Teutonic life ran in friendly parallelism, that Goethe first discovered the distinctive features of each. It was here he met Herder, whose oracular utterances on the subjects of poetry, religion, and society powerfully affected him. Herder was a disciple of Rousseau, and had declared war, not against civilization in general, but against that phase of it which was represented by France. He detested the entire periwig spirit, and denounced in vigorous rhetoric its hollow frivolity. He clamored for truth and simplicity, and selected from the literature of the world certain books in which he detected the strong and uncorrupted voice of nature. Among these were the Bible, Homer, Shakespeare, Ossian, and the ballad literature of all nations. It is curious, indeed, to find Ossian in such a company, but it must be remem-

bered that MacPherson's deception had not then been exposed.

Goethe drank in eagerly these new and refreshing doctrines. He began to read the writers Herder recommended, and in his enthusiasm for Shakespeare soon went beyond his teacher. He condemned his own frivolous imitations of French models, and wrestled with gigantic plans for future productions which should infuse new vigor into the enervated literature of the Fatherland. It was during this period of Titanic enthusiasm that he conceived the idea of "Faust," for the complete embodiment of which he labored, though with many interruptions, for sixty years, until a few months before his death. A lively interest in natural science also began to develop itself in him, while his disinclination for the law showed no signs of abating. At lectures he was not a frequent guest; but for all that his intellectual life was aroused and he was by no means idle. With his great absorptive capacity he assimilated a large amount of the most varied knowledge, but insisted upon exercising his choice as to the kind of learning which his nature and faculties craved. The result was that, when the time came for taking the doctor's degree, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, unquestionably the most brilliant intellect Germany has produced, failed to pass his examinations. He was, however, not ignominiously "flunked," but was permitted to depart with the more modest title of "Licentiate of the Law." It was not his legal learning which was found to be deficient, but his

thesis was tintured with alarming sentiments which savored of Rousseau. The faculty felt itself justified in stamping such dangerous doctrines with its disapproval. This was not what the old gentleman in Frankfort had looked forward to, and it is presumable that the reception he gave his son, when he returned in 1771 to the city of his fathers, was not over-cordial. He was probably not wise enough to see that he himself was to blame for having compelled the boy to devote himself to a study for which he had neither taste nor inclination.

An incident of Goethe's life in Strassburg, which greatly influenced his literary activity, was his meeting with Frederika Brion, the daughter of the parson at Sesenheim. The parsonage was about six hours' journey from the city, and Goethe was in the habit of visiting there with his friend Weyland, who was a relative of the family. The parson was a plain, God-fearing man, who went about in dressing-gown and slippers and with a long pipe in his mouth. His daughters, Salome and Frederika, were { what the daughters of country clergymen are apt to be—nice, domestic girls, who would make charming wives for almost anybody who would have the good sense to propose to them. Frederika was pretty, and moreover she had an unfortified heart. She possessed a few artless accomplishments—such as playing and singing—but when she was to display these before company, everything went wrong. Her portrait, as drawn by Goethe in his autobiography, is one of the loveliest things in German lit-

erature. Her simple talk and strictly practical interests, far removed from all sentimentality, seemed to be in perfect accord with her little "tip-tilted nose" and her half-rustic Alsatian costume. It is obvious that she appealed to Goethe's artistic nature; that he gloried in the romantic phases of his simple life at the parsonage. He had already then the keenest appreciation of what one might call the literary aspect of his experiences. He knew at once, and probably anticipated in spirit, how they would look in a book. But he was at the same time an inflammable youth, whose heart was readily touched through the medium of his fancy. By degrees, as he established himself in the favor of every member of the Brion family, his relation to Frederika became that of a lover. The father and the mother accepted him in this capacity, and Frederika herself was overflowing with deep and quiet happiness. By an unlucky chance, however, the two Brion sisters were invited to spend some time with friends in Strassburg. Goethe was charmed at the prospect. But, strange to say, torn out of the idyllic frame in which he had been wont to see her, Frederika seemed no longer so miraculous. She needed the rural parsonage and the yellow wheat-fields for a setting; amid the upholstered furniture and gilded conventionalities of the city she seemed only a simple-hearted country girl, perhaps a little deficient in manners. From that time the charm was broken. Frederika returned to her home; Goethe, too, soon left Strassburg. Freder-

ika waited for him month after month, but he did not come. He lacked courage to tell her of the changed state of his feelings, and left her to pine away between hope and cruel disappointment. A serious illness was the result, which came near ending her life. Eight years later Goethe, then a world-renowned man, revisited Sesenheim and found her yet unmarried. She was as frank and friendly as ever, but her youthful gayety was gone; she was pale, hushed, and subdued. She made no allusion to the relation which had once existed between them, but she conducted him silently to the arbor in the garden where they had spent so many rapturous hours together. There they sat down and talked of indifferent things; but many strange thoughts arose in the minds of both.

Frederika died of consumption in 1813.

After his return to Frankfort, in 1771, Goethe made an earnest effort to please his father by laying the foundation of a legal practice. The counsellor himself aided him in every possible way, looked up his authorities, and acted as a private referee in doubtful questions. For all that, it was literature and not law which filled Goethe's mind and fashioned his visions of the future. In the intervals of business he paid visits to the city of Darmstadt, where he made the acquaintance of Herder's *fiancée*, Caroline Flachsland, and of Merck, who became his model for Mephistopheles. It was an interesting society which he here encountered, a society animated by an exalted veneration for poetic and intel-

lectual achievements and devoted to a kind of emotional extravagance—an artificial heightening of every fine feeling and sentiment. Caroline Flachland and her circle, recognizing Goethe's extraordinary endowment, and feeling, perhaps, doubly inclined in his favor by his handsome exterior, accepted him, as it were, on trust, and honored him for what he was going to do rather than for anything which he had actually accomplished. His love affair with Frederika, which was here sentimentally discussed, also added to the interest with which he was regarded. A man who is known to have broken many hearts is naturally invested with a tantalizing charm to women who have yet hearts to be broken. At all events the great expectations which were entertained of him in the Darmstadt circle, stimulated him to justify the reputation which had been thrust upon him. In 1772 he published the drama, "Götz von Berlichingen," which at one stroke established his position as the foremost among German poets. It must be remembered, however, that Germany had at that time no really great poet. Lessing was, indeed, alive, and had written dramas which, in point of theatrical effectiveness and brilliancy, were superior to "Götz." But Lessing disclaimed the title of poet, and his prominence as a critic and a polemic defender of rationalism overshadowed, in the minds of his contemporaries, his earlier activity in the service of the muses. Moreover, it is not to be denied that "Götz," with all its crudity of construction, is a

warmer and more full-blooded production than any of the plays which Lessing had written for the purpose of demonstrating the soundness of his canons of dramatic criticism.

"Götz" is a somewhat chaotic performance, obviously written in imitation of Shakespeare. It violates, whether purposely or not, every law of dramatic construction. It is a touching and poetical story, displaying psychological insight and vigorous characterization. But it takes a nimble fancy to keep up with the perpetual changes of scene; and even the tendency and *morale* of the piece are open to criticism. Goethe enlists the reader's sympathies in behalf of the law-breaker, whose sturdy manhood and stubborn independence bring him into conflict with the state. Götz, in spite of his personal merits, represents the wild and disorderly individualism of the Middle Ages, at war with the forces of order and social progress, represented by the Emperor and the free cities. Therefore it is scarcely proper to apostrophize him as the martyr of a noble cause.

In "Götz" Goethe deals, secondarily, with faithlessness as a psychological problem. He practically assigns to himself the part of the villain, Weisslingen, who from sheer weakness, "possessing no resolution either for good or for ill," breaks the heart of a noble young girl. But Weisslingen is faithless not because of any sinister delight in breaking hearts, but because he lacks the courage to be true, when he falls under the spell of a more dazzling and

more powerful charmer. The latter, Adelaide von Walldorf, is the only conventionally wicked stock character of the drama to be found in all Goethe's writings; and she is, curiously enough, the only one of his female characters for whom no living original or prototype has been found. A second revised edition of "Götz" was published in 1773, in which some of the most daring unconventionalities of the first edition are changed or omitted, and the dramatic action is concentrated and much improved.

After having practised law in a leisurely fashion in Frankfort, Goethe removed, at his father's recommendation, to Wetzlar, where he was admitted as a practitioner at the Imperial Chamber of Justice. This removal took place in May, 1774. Among the first acquaintances which he made in this city were a young jurist named Kestner and his *fiancée*, Charlotte Buff. Kestner and Goethe became good friends, in spite of differences of temperament and character, and their friendship soon came to include Lotte. The jurist, who was a plain, practical man, and the soul of honor, could see no danger in the daily association of his betrothed with a handsome and brilliant young poet, who confided to her his hopes and ambitions, romped with her small brothers and sisters, and captivated the entire family by the reckless grace and charm of his manners. Kestner did not suspect that there were depths in Lotte's nature which he had never sounded, regions of sentiment and fancy which he could

never hope to explore. For Lotte, though she had a strong sense of duty, had by no means as well-regulated and business-like a heart as her practical lover. Thus the strange thing came to pass: Lotte fell in love with Goethe, and Goethe with Lotte. They made no confession of their secret even to each other, but they revelled in each other's company, undisturbed by Kestner's presence. At last, however, a crisis occurred. Goethe began to see that he was treading on dangerous ground. One evening, as he was lounging at Lotte's feet, playing with the flounces on her dress, and the talk had taken a serious turn, he remarked, referring to a brief journey which he was about to undertake, that he hoped they would meet "*jenseits*" (beyond), meaning beyond the mountains which he was going to cross. Lotte misunderstood the allusion, and, quite forgetting Kestner's presence, answered, fervently, that she could well be reconciled to losing him in this world, implying that she hoped to be united to him in the hereafter. It was a sudden flash which revealed to Goethe the fact that Lotte loved him. He was Kestner's friend, was trusted by him, and could not act dishonorably. So he took his leave, packed his trunks that very night, and wrote three despairing letters, in which he avowed his love for Lotte, and gave this as the reason of his departure. He made it appear, probably in order to shield her, that his love was hopeless and that her happiness was dearer to him than his own. That this is the true version of the Wetzlar affair

is made plain by the documents published by Herman Grimm, in his "Lectures on Goethe."

This episode with Charlotte Buff and Kestner furnished Goethe with the material for his celebrated romance, "The Sorrows of Werther," which he published in September, 1774. As was usual with him, and indeed with every great poet, he did not copy the actual relation, but he borrowed from it what was typical and immortal, and left out what was accidental and insignificant. Thus Lotte in "Werther" is not Charlotte Buff, though she sat for her model and furnished the main features of the beautiful type. In a still less degree is the pitiful Albert the author's friend Kestner, though he is sufficiently like the latter to justify him in being offended. The character of Werther himself is more of a free creation, though his external fate was borrowed from that of a young secretary named Jerusalem, who shot himself for love of a married woman. In all other respects Werther is Goethe himself in his "Storm and Stress" period, while all the vital juices of his being were in ferment, while his youthful heart beat loudly in sympathy with the world's woe; while the tumultuous currents of emotion swayed him hither and thither, and could not be made to run in the safe conventional channels. And yet, even in those days, there was a still small voice of reason in Goethe's soul which restrained him from excesses—an under-current of sanity and sobriety which kept him always sound in his innermost core. If Werther had been

like his prototype in this respect he would not have killed himself—in other words, he would not have been Werther.

The amazing popularity which "The Sorrows of Werther" attained, not only in Germany but throughout the civilized world, cannot be due to the story as such, which is as simple as any episode of daily life. It is only explainable on the supposition that the book for the first time voiced a sentiment which was well-nigh universal in Europe, during the eighteenth century. The Germans call it *Welt-schmerz*—i.e., world-woe. It takes in "Werther" the form of a tender melancholy, a sense of poetic sadness, which, after the unhappy love affair, deepens into a gentle despair and leads to self-destruction. Psychologically, this is a very interesting phenomenon. The pent-up energy of the nation, which was denied its natural sphere of action in public and political life, takes a morbid turn and wastes itself in unwholesome introspection, coddling of artificial sentiment, and a vague discontent with the world in general.

During the year 1774 Goethe also published the tragedy "Clavigo," which was a great disappointment to his friends. Its plot is borrowed from the "Memoirs of Beaumarchais," and deals again with the problem of faithlessness. In poetic intensity and fervor it is inferior to "Götz" and "Werther," while, in point of dramatic construction, it marks an advance. It is his own faithlessness to Fredrika which Goethe obviously has in mind and which

he is endeavoring psychologically to account for. But even from this point of view the tragedy can scarcely be called a success ; for the reader closes the book with the conviction that Clavigo was, if not a villain, at all events a weak poltroon, though as such a perfectly comprehensible one.

After his departure from Wetzlar, Goethe once more took up his residence in his native city, and, before long, was again involved in a tender relation. This time, it was a rich and beautiful lady of society who attracted him — quite a contrast to the rural Frederika and the amiable and domestic Lotte. Anna Elizabeth Schönemann, generally known as Lilli, was about sixteen years old when Goethe fell a victim to her charms. She was a spoiled child, wilful and coquettish, but high-bred and with a charm of manner, when she chose to be agreeable, which fully explains the poet's devotion to her. Moreover, there was nothing meek and abjectly admiring about her. She teased her adorer, tormented him by her whims, and took delight in exercising her power over him. This was quite a new experience to a young man who had been accustomed to easy conquests and uncritical adoration. He was now drawn into general society, and, after his engagement with Lilli had been made public, was compelled to dance attendance upon her, early and late, at balls and dinner-parties. As an experience this might be valuable enough, but Goethe soon tired of it, and protested in prose and verse against his servitude. Lilli, however, though she was sincerely

attached to him, could not be made to give up the youthful gayety which seemed so attractive to her. Quarrels ensued, alienations and reconciliations, and finally a complete rupture. In many poems from this period Goethe chronicles the various stages of his love for Lilli and laments her loss. There is no doubt that she had the making of a noble woman in her; her later life, and particularly her utterances concerning her relation to Goethe, show that she was neither frivolous nor shallow-hearted. But she was young and beautiful, and had a sense of power which it was but natural for her to exercise. The meek and submissive maiden is in undue favor with men, and Goethe's biographers, being all men, have done their best to revile the memory of Lilli.

Among the friends who were warmly attached to Goethe at this time, Fritz Jacobi and Lavater demand a passing notice. Both presented a queer mixture of character, which accounts for their subsequent alienation from the poet. It is worthy of remark that scarcely any of the associates of Goethe's youth maintained their intimate relations with him through life. He valued a friend only as long as he was in sympathy with him, and as he outgrew his youthful self, the friends who had been identified with this self lapsed into the distance. He did not value fidelity in the ordinary sense of the term, when it involved a perpetual strain upon the heart—when it had become a matter of duty rather than of affection. As regards Lavater, he was, with all his ostentatious spirituality, a good deal of a charlatan,

even so much so as to justify Goethe's epigram in the "Xenien :"

"Oh, what a pity that Nature but one man made out of you,
friend !

Besides for an honest man, there was also the stuff for a
knave."

He reminds one of Carlyle's friend Irving, who also started as an honest zealot and lapsed into emotional excesses, which leave one no choice but to question either his sanity or his honesty. The so-called science of physiognomy, which Lavater claimed to have discovered, at one time interested Goethe ; but later, when he became familiar with scientific methods of research, he could no longer accept Lavater as a guide.

Fritz Jacobi was an honest sentimentalist, who ardently revered Goethe for his great powers of mind and intellect. They travelled together, and revelled in the emotions of love and sympathy which welled forth from the souls of both. Everything that they saw filled them with ecstatic wonder, and furnished themes for extravagant discourses and poetic dreams. Jacobi, even though the years sobered him, never completely outgrew this state, and when he published his sentimental romance "Woldemar," which Goethe could not admire, their friendship began to cool. They drifted slowly apart, though there was no rupture to signalize their estrangement.

In spite of all his efforts, Goethe could not obtain

any lasting satisfaction from his occupation with the law, and he grew lax in his attention to professional duties. The counsellor was grievously disappointed, and the relation between father and son grew so strained that all the diplomacy of the mother was required to keep them from open disagreement. It was therefore a godsend to Goethe when, in 1775, the two princes of Saxe-Weimar arrived in Frankfurt, and extended to him an invitation to visit their court. The eldest of the brothers, Karl August, took a great fancy to the author of "Werther," and made every effort to keep him as a friend and companion. To this end he conferred upon Goethe the title of Privy Counsellor, with an annual salary of twelve hundred thalers and a vote in the ducal cabinet. Goethe had thus at last got firm ground under his feet, and could now, without fear of the future, give himself up to his favorite pursuits. His arrival in Weimar made a sensation. His fame, his beauty, and his winning manners gave him at once a *prestige*, which he maintained undiminished to the end of his days. The duke, who was a blunt and honest fellow, fond of pleasure and yet zealous for the welfare of his subjects, found in Goethe a firm support for his noblest endeavors. As a boon-companion in pleasure he found the poet no less attractive; though it is now conceded that the tales which were circulated concerning the excesses of the two friends, at court festivals and rural excursions, were greatly exaggerated. It is true, a pause occurs in Goethe's literary activity after his arrival in Wei-

mar ; but this was due not to preoccupation with pleasure, but to the zeal with which he devoted himself to his official duties. It was important to Goethe, as a poet, to gain a deeper insight into practical reality, and he seized the present opportunity to familiarize himself with many phases of life which hitherto had lain beyond his horizon. Strange as it may seem to those who identify with the name of poet everything that is fantastic and irregular, he made a model official—punctual and exact in all his dealings, painstaking, upright, and inflexible.

During his early youth, Goethe had been identified with the school in German literature known as the "Storm and Stress" ("Sturm und Drang"). The members of this school had clamored for a return to Nature—meaning by Nature absence of civilization. Civilization was held responsible for all the ills to which flesh is heir, and the remedy was held to be the abolishment of all the artificial refinements of life which interfered with the free expression of Nature. Goethe never went to the same length in these doctrines as some of his associates (Klinger, Lenz, Leisewitz), but he was, for all that, like them, a disciple of Rousseau, and had, both in "Götz" and "Werther," made war upon civilized society. It is therefore notable that, after his arrival in Weimar and his closer contact with the actualities of life, a profound change came over him, which amounted to a revolution in his convictions. The wild ferment of his youth had found its natural expression in the fervid, tumultuous diction of the

"Storm and Stress," but his maturer manhood demanded a clearer, soberer, and more precise utterance. The change that took place in his style during the first ten years of his sojourn in Weimar was therefore a natural one, and ought to have caused no surprise to those who knew him.

A very exhaustive record of Goethe's inner and outer life during this period, is contained in his correspondence with Frau von Stein, the wife of Baron von Stein, a nobleman in the duke's service. She was seven years older than the poet, and the mother of seven children. Beautiful she was not, but she was a woman of exceptional culture and finely attuned mind, capable of comprehending subtle shades of thought and feeling. Her face, as the portraits show, was full of delicacy and refinement. Her marriage was unhappy, and without any protest on the part of her husband, she sought in daily intercourse with Goethe a consolation for the miseries of her life. Yet there is no sufficient reason for believing that the relation was anything more than a bond of sympathy and an intellectual friendship. His letters, appointing interviews and overflowing with affectionate assurances, are those of a lover. Unfortunately Frau von Stein's own letters have not been preserved; she took the precaution to demand them back and burn them, when their friendship came to an end.*

In September, 1786, Goethe started from Karls-

* For a fuller account see the essay on "Goethe's Relations with Women."

bad for Italy, and arrived in October in Rome. For many years it had been his dearest desire to see the Eternal City, and to study with his own eyes the masterpieces of ancient art. In his trunk he carried several unfinished manuscripts, and in his head a number of literary plans which he here hoped to mature, in the presence of the marble gods and heroes of the ancient world. He associated chiefly with the artists Tischbein, Meyer, Philip Hackert, and Angelica Kaufmann, and revelled in art talk and criticism. He took up again the study of Homer, and began to meditate upon an Homeric drama, to be called "Nausicæa." Italy, with its bright sky, its gently sloping mountains, clad with silvery olive-trees, and its shores washed by the blue Mediterranean waves, became a revelation to him, and he apprehended keenly her deepest poetic meaning. A cheerful paganism henceforth animates his writings, a delight in sensuous beauty, and a certain impatience with the Christian ideal of self-abnegation. The Hellenic ideal of harmonious culture—an even development of all the powers of body and soul—appealed powerfully to him. He flung away his Gothic inheritance, undervaluing, in his devotion to the Greeks, what was noble and beautiful in the sturdy, self-denying manhood of the North. His drama "Iphigenia," which he had first written in prose, he now rewrote in classical pentameters, and sent it home to his friends in Weimar, who were completely mystified, and did not quite dare to say that they did not comprehend it. For all that, this

drama is a very remarkable production, uniting, as it were, the Greek and the Germanic ideal, and being in spirit as close to the latter as it is in form to the former. Goethe dealt with this old classic tale as no Greek could ever have done. He makes the gentle womanhood of Iphigenia soften the manners of the fierce Taurians, and by her noble character act as a civilizing influence in the midst of the barbarous race. The Greeks had not arrived at such an estimate of women ; nor would Euripides, who dealt with the same legend, have understood Goethe's version of it any better than did Herder and his friends in Weimar.

In June, 1788, Goethe again turned his face northward, after an absence of nearly two years. One of the first effects of his Italian experience was that he took a mistress, named Christiane Vulpius, whom many years later he married. Christiane was a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl, with an abundance of curly hair, in no wise intellectual, and belonging to a family in which drunkenness was hereditary. She was of redundant physical development, had always a bright smile, and was sufficiently intelligent to take a mild interest in her lover's literary and scientific pursuits. But that his *liaison* with her was, for all that, a deplorable mistake, can scarcely be questioned. In the first place she developed, as she grew older, her hereditary vice, and was frequently unpresentable on account of intoxication. The son whom she bore to Goethe inherited the same failing, and died suddenly in Rome, as has

been surmised, from the effects of a carouse. The young man, who was handsome in person and well endowed, had been married some years before and was the father of two sons, both of whom died unmarried. Walter von Goethe, who lived until April, 1885, was a chamberlain at the Court of Weimar, and at one time cherished poetical aspirations. With his death the race of Goethe became extinct in the direct line. It is, indeed, true that the sins of the fathers avenge themselves upon the children.

Christiane's removal to Goethe's house, where he henceforth claimed for her the place and respect due to a wife, caused a grievous commotion in Weimar. Frau von Stein was the first to take offence, and a rupture of their former relation was the result. Herder also remonstrated, and soon ceased to count himself among Goethe's friends.

In 1789 Goethe completed a drama which, like the "Iphigenia," had existed in an earlier prose version. It was entitled "Tasso," and dealt with the history of the Italian poet of that name. Its purpose seems to be to protest against the over-estimation of a poet's calling, then in vogue, and to assert the rights of practical reason as against those of the imagination. Tasso is represented as an impulsive and warm-hearted man who is violently swayed by his emotions, while the cool-headed man of the world, Antonio, represents the opposite type. In the contest which arises between them Tasso is worsted; and it is Goethe's purpose to convince the reader that he deserves his fate. In this, however, he is not entirely

successful. Antonio, the adroit and sagacious diplomat, is an unattractive character as compared with the noble and generous Tasso, who errs from inability to restrain his passionate adoration of the Princess Leonora. The world is apt to sympathize more with generous folly than with far-seeing sagacity and nicely-adjusted calculation. And yet, when we have advanced another century, I am inclined to think that we shall agree that Goethe's judgment was right.

As an acting play "Tasso" is even less effective than "Götz" and "Iphigenia," being rather a poetic and admirably conceived story, told in dramatic form, than a drama in the ordinary acceptance of the term.

If further proof were needed that Goethe was not a dramatist, "Egmont" furnishes conclusive evidence. Here were again a series of delightful characterizations, subtle, and yet vigorous; and picturesquely effective scenes, strung together most entertainingly, but only with remote reference to the requirements of the stage. There is no perceptible acceleration of the action, as it progresses, no sharp accentuation of motives and effects, and no inexorable necessity, either internal or external, which hurries the hero to his destruction. No poet, however great, can emancipate himself from these laws, if he wishes to produce a successful tragedy. As a mere literary production, "Egmont" is fully worthy of the author of "Götz" and "Werther," and deserves the immortality which it has earned. The

types of Clärchen and Egmont have a perennial beauty, of which no critic can deprive them. The great elemental passion, which is the mainspring of their speech and action, appeals to all hearts alike, and invests them with a charm which can never grow old.

The critic who first expressed substantially the above opinion of "Egmont" was a young man named Frederick Schiller, who was just then glorying in his first fame as the author of "The Robbers" and other sensational dramas. He had had a great desire to make the acquaintance of Goethe, whom he revered; though he was probably aware of the dislike which Goethe entertained for the violent and declamatory school which he represented. At a meeting which took place in September, 1788, Schiller was quite grieved at the coolness with which the elder poet received him; and at a subsequent interview he likewise failed to make any advance in Goethe's favor. It was not until six years later that a literary enterprise ("Die Horen"), which Schiller had started, brought them into closer contact; and Goethe learned to value the genius of the man whom he had politely repelled. From this time forth they saw much of each other, and remained in correspondence whenever chance separated them. A beautiful friendship, founded upon mutual respect and community of interests, sprung up between them, and deepened with every year, until death separated them. Literature has no more perfect relation to show between two great men than this between Goethe and Schiller.

No jealousy, no passing disagreement, clouded the serenity of their intercourse. They met, as it were, only upon the altitudes of the soul, where no small and petty passions have the power to reach. Their correspondence, which has been published, is a noble monument to the worth of both. The earnestness with which they discuss the principles of their art, the profound conscientiousness and high-bred courtesy with which they criticise each other's works, and their generous rivalry in the loftiest excellence have no parallel in the entire history of literature.

It was chiefly due to the influence of Schiller that Goethe determined to resume work upon the fragment of "Faust," which he had kept for many years in his portfolio, and finally published incomplete in the edition of 1790. Schiller saw at once the possibilities of this theme, and the magnificent dimensions of the thought which underlay the daring conception. Goethe, being preoccupied with the classical fancies which the Italian journey had revived, was at first unwilling to listen to his friend's advice, and spoke disparagingly of the fragment as something too closely allied with his Gothic "Storm and Stress" period, which he had now outgrown. So long, however, did Schiller persevere, that Goethe's interest was reawakened, the plan widened and matured, and for the rest of his life Goethe reserved his best and noblest thought for this work, fully conscious that upon it his claim to immortality would rest. Still, it was not until 1808 that the First Part finally ap-

peared in its present form. In the meanwhile several works of minor consequence occupied Goethe's mind besides the romance "Wilhelm Meister," the fundamental thought of which is kindred to that of "Faust." The satirical poem, "Reynard the Fox," founded upon an older popular model, was published in 1794 and made some passing stir, and a rather prolix and uninteresting romance, entitled "The Conversations of German Emigrants," also engaged his attention. In 1795 the first two volumes of "Wilhelm Meister" were published, and were received with enthusiasm by some and with censure by many. The public at large, being unable to comprehend the philosophical purpose of the work, were puzzled. As a story the book was sufficiently entertaining, but it hinted everywhere at meanings which it did not fully reveal. It was obvious that it was this hidden significance which the author had at heart amid the bewildering panorama of shifting scenes and persons. The plot is altogether too complex to be unravelled here, but the philosophy of the book may be briefly stated.

"Wilhelm Meister" aims at nothing less than to portray the disintegration of feudal society, then visibly commencing — the transition from a feudal to an industrial civilization. The nobleman's prerogatives cannot endure unless they are founded upon qualities of mind and character which make him indispensable to the state. In other words, it is a man's utility which in the end must establish his place in society. All other distinctions are artificial

and evanescent. That society had not yet reached this state Goethe was well aware, but he merely wished to indicate the direction which the development of the future must inevitably take. The quest for the ideal which drives Wilhelm from the routine of the paternal counting-house into a life of wild adventure, is merely the individual manifestation of the restless discontent which animates society at large, and is slowly revolutionizing it, in accordance with the changed conditions of modern life. The world's ideal, like that of Wilhelm Meister, is perpetually changing, and each achievement in social reform is but a stepping-stone to still nobler achievements. Wilhelm, when young, seeks his ideal in a free and unrestrained life among actors and strolling vagabonds; then the freedom from care and the commanding position of a nobleman seem to offer the highest felicity, and at last, after having had this illusion dispelled, he finds happiness in self-forgetful devotion to duty. Not in freedom from labor, but in devotion to labor; not in unrestrained pursuit of pleasure, but in a well-defined sphere of daily utility, can man alone find happiness. This is the lesson of "Wilhelm Meister," and a noble lesson it is. The Second Part of the book, which was not completed until 1821, only emphasizes this same moral, though the moral is concealed under a mass of more or less obscure symbols, which often seem needlessly perplexing.

The first fruit of Goethe's union with Schiller was a series of satirical epigrams, called "Die Xenien"

(1797). These were intended to punish the enemies and detractors of the literary firm of Goethe & Schiller. They do not indeed spare persons, but they seem chiefly directed against what Goethe regarded as false and dangerous tendencies in German literature and society; and they attack pretence, charlatanism, and unsound canons of criticism with no gentle hand. They do not only tear down, they also build up. They praise what is noble and chastise what is ignoble. Witty in the French sense are but few of them; but all of them have a weighty meaning.

Immediately in the wake of the "Xenien" followed the rural idyl, "Hermann and Dorothea" (1797), which suddenly revived Goethe's popularity with the mass of readers, who, since his Italian journey, had gradually drifted away from him. It was as if he had meant to show them that he could be as simple and popular as anybody, if he chose. Here was a story of German rural life in which no one had seen any poetry before, except Voss, who, in his "Luise" had delivered a turgid homily in hexameters on the rural virtues. Goethe well knew this poem, but he was not afraid of incurring the charge of having imitated Voss, because he knew that a literary subject belongs, not to him who deals with it first, but to him who deals with it best. There is a delightful Homeric flavor in his hexameters; they roll and march along with splendid resonance. In the characterization of the Landlord of the Golden Lion and his wife and neighbors, the

same easy mastery is visible which gave the vivid form and color to the features of Egmont, Götz, and Werther.

Far less successful, both in point of popularity and literary excellence, was the tragedy, "The Natural Daughter," which owed its origin to Goethe's excessive admiration of Sophocles and Æschylus. The types are here colorless—not because Goethe could not individualize them, but from conscientious motives—because the Greek poets deal merely with general types and avoid a too vivid individualization. Far more worthy specimens of Græco-Germanic art are the beautiful classical elegies, "Alexis and Dora," "Euphrosyne," and "Amyntor." Also a host of fine, spirited ballads, vigorous in tone and exquisite in color, date from this period. Goethe had long ago discovered the charm of the German folk-song, and had estimated the poetic force of this simple national strain.

In 1805 Schiller died, and Goethe was once more alone; for among his neighbors and townsmen he found no more congenial companions. Scientific pursuits began more and more to absorb him, and the opinion became prevalent that he had now ceased to be a poet, and that his absurd ambition to be a scientist had disqualified him for further literary production. Goethe was not in the least disturbed by these rumors, but pursued his investigations in botany, geology, and optics with undiminished zeal. All the while he worked quietly on "Faust" and his "Doctrine of Color," and made

experiments with the sun spectrum—in which he believed he had discovered phenomena which were at variance with the Newtonian theory of color. That he was here on a wrong track we may now freely admit, but Professor Tyndale asserts that his very mistakes afford evidences of his genius. The fact is, he was in advance of his age in the value he attached to scientific education ; and having had no opportunities for such education in his youth, he made up for what he had missed by an increased zeal during his mature years. He beheld Nature in her grand unity, and his penetrating vision saw the great causal chain which unites her most varied phenomena. In this, and in this alone, consisted his greatness as a scientist. He was the Faust who by a daring synthesis brought order into the chaos of dispersed facts, which a hundred pedantic and painstaking Wagners had accumulated. The Wagners, therefore, did not love him, and their hostile opinions made enough noise in their day to reach as a faint echo down to the present. Nevertheless the scientists of to-day have recognized the value of Goethe's theory of the typical plant, and of the leaf as the typical organ of plant life, which he has fully developed in his book on "The Metamorphoses of Plants." A kindred thought, applied to the animal kingdom, led to the discovery of the intermaxillary bone, which finally established the identity of the human skeleton with that of other mammals ; and in geology to his championing the so-called Neptunic theory of the develop-

ment of the earth against Humboldt's Vulcanism, which attributed to volcanic agencies the principal influence in fashioning the globe's surface. In all these controversies he emphasized the essential identity of Nature in all her phenomena ; the unity and organic coherence of all her varied life ; and he did not, in the end, hesitate to draw the logical conclusion from these premises, and declare himself a believer in the theory of evolution, half a century before Darwin had advanced the same doctrine.

All these heterogeneous studies became tributary to Goethe's greatest work, "Faust" (1790 and 1808), in which the highest results of his colossal knowledge are deposited. It is his philosophy of life which he has here expounded, under a wealth of symbols and images which dazzle the eye, and to the superficial reader often obscure the profounder meaning. To the majority of English and American critics "Faust" is but a touching and beautiful love-story, and the opinion is unblushingly expressed by hoary wiseacres that the Second Part is a mistake of Goethe's old age, and in no wise worthy of the First. If nothing is worth saying except that which appeals to the ordinary intellect, trained in the common schools, then this criticism is not to be cavilled with ; but Goethe had during the latter part of his life entered a realm of thought, where he was hidden from the multitude ; where but a few congenial minds could follow him. To these I would endeavor to demonstrate what "Faust" means if the

space permitted.* All I can do here is briefly to indicate the fundamental thought.

Goethe borrowed from Spinoza the daring proposition that God is responsible for evil. He undertook to demonstrate that evil was not an afterthought on the part of God, which stole into His system of the universe by an unforeseen chance, but an essential part of that system from the beginning. In other words, as he says in the "Prologue in Heaven," God gave Mephistopheles as a companion to Faust. Selfishness, which is merely another form of the instinct of self-preservation, is the lever of the world's history, and if a man were born who was entirely free from it, he would be unable to maintain his place in the world as it is now constituted. He would be trampled down, and would perish. The unrestrained egoism of barbaric times has gradually been limited, as civilization has advanced, by laws, which in each age express the average moral sense, and are intended to secure the preservation of society. But egoism, though variously disguised and turned into useful channels, is yet the leading motive in men's actions—Mephistopheles, though a most civilized gentleman, is still at Faust's elbow, and stimulates him to daring enterprise of which, without this unlovely companion, he would never have dreamed.

Faust, then, is meant to symbolize mankind, and

* I may refer anyone who is interested in the subject to my book, "Goethe and Schiller," in which will be found an exhaustive commentary on "Faust."

Mephistopheles the principle of selfishness or of evil, in whatever way disguised. In the symbolic fable, Mephistopheles makes a wager with the Lord, that if the Lord will give him the right to tempt Faust, Faust will in the end be the devil's. This wager is accepted, and Mephistopheles proceeds to introduce Faust to all phases of sensual pleasure, in the hope of corrupting him. Faust, however, though he sins, is in no wise corrupted. The love affair and the subsequent tragedy with Margaret are, from the author's point of view, merely episodes in Faust's development, cruel as it may seem. Faust, in his typical capacity, rises above the error which came near crippling him, to higher phases of being. His ideal changes; he goes in search of culture and intellectual achievement. Mephistopheles's attempts to lead him astray are turned directly to useful purposes. The devil, who in the sensual stage of his development had had a certain predominance over him, becomes now more and more subservient to him. Faust's intellectual powers are especially employed in statesmanship and political activity for the welfare of the state. Then comes the pursuit of the beautiful, regarded as an educational agency, symbolized in the quest for Helen of Troy and the pilgrimage to Greece. Particularly in the classical Walpurgis Night are the spiritual value and the ennobling influence of Greek art emphasized. The last and concluding phase of man's development, which is logically derived from the preceding ones, is *altru-*

ism—a noble devotion to humanity, and self-forgetful labor for the common weal. In this activity Faust finds happiness, and exclaims to the flying moment, "Stay, thou art so fair."

It is scarcely necessary to add that "Faust" remained a sealed book to the majority of Goethe's contemporaries. Some few saw the scope and purpose of the work and valued it accordingly; others pretended to understand more than they did; and a whole literature of commentaries was supplied by the learned ingenuity and zeal of the Fatherland. Goethe sat at home and smiled at his critics, but never undertook either to confirm or to refute their theories.

In 1809 he again published a book which was a puzzle both to his admirers and his enemies. This was a novel entitled "Elective Affinities." He had at that time made the acquaintance of a young girl named Minna Herzlieb, an adopted daughter of the bookseller Frommann in Jena. He became greatly interested in her, addressed sonnets to her, and quite turned her head. To be loved by Goethe, even though he was no longer young, was a distinction which no girl could contemplate with indifference. Moreover he was, apart from his celebrity, a man of majestic presence and a kind of serene Olympian beauty. Minna Herzlieb's parents, fearing that she might lose her heart, as she already had her head, made haste to send her beyond the reach of Goethe's influence. Out of this relation, or rather out of its possibilities, grew "Elective

Affinities." Goethe was married to Christiane, whose unfortunate propensity for drink had then already developed. Minna was young and fair, and attracted him strongly. Here were the elements for a tragedy. In the book the situation is essentially the same, though Charlotte, Edward's wife, is afflicted with no vice. It might be described as a four-cornered attachment, in which everybody loves the one he cannot have. These attachments are described by analogy, with chemical laws, as entirely irresponsible natural forces which assert themselves in the individual without any guilty agency of his own. The conclusion is, however, not that marriage, which interferes with the consummation of these elective affinities, is wrong, and ought to be abolished. If there is any moral at all (which is not perfectly obvious), it is that every man and woman should be on his guard against such relations, as they are sure to lead to unhappiness and disaster.

Christiane, Goethe's wife, died in 1816, and he mourned her sincerely. Habit had bred a certain attachment, of which, with all her failings, she was not entirely undeserving. In her early youth, before she had yet assumed the name of wife, she had inspired the immortal "Roman Elegies," in which her lover, with pagan unrestraint, had sung the delight of the senses. She had been his associate, too, in his botanical studies, and had assisted him in his search for the typical plant. But a wife in the noblest sense—a friend and a companion of her

husband's higher life—she had not been and could not have been.

In the last decades of his life, Goethe was largely absorbed in scientific researches, and in arranging and editing the labors of his early life. Of particular importance is his autobiography, "Truth and Fiction" ("Aus Meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit"), which relates with interesting minuteness that portion of his life which preceded his removal to Weimar. The book is an historical document of the highest importance, though not invariably a literal recital of fact. It gives the intellectual and moral complexion of the eighteenth century in Germany, as no other work has ever done. Also his letters from Italy to Herder and Frau von Stein he carefully edited and collected under the title "Italian Journey." Then, as if by a miracle, came a poetic Indian summer, a fresh flow of lyrical verse, full of youthful spontaneity and fervor. This collection, which was published in 1819 under the title, "The West-Eastern Divan," was a free imitation of Oriental models, translated into German by Hammer Purgstall (1813). The first half of the book is chiefly didactic, while the latter half contains love lyrics, which in freshness of fancy and sweetness of melody rival the productions of Goethe's best years. A few of these poems were written by Marianne Willemer, the wife of a merchant in Frankfort, and with her consent included in the collection. She cherished an ardent admiration for the old poet, and he highly valued her friendship.

She is supposed to be "the beloved one" whom he celebrates in the book of "Zuleika." The book of "Timur" is a free poetic moralization, concerning the rise and fall of Napoleon, disguised in Oriental forms. What is particularly remarkable in these melodious meditations is the novelty of their metres. Goethe discards, for the time, the classical measures in which his genius had moved with such sovereign ease, and adopts the strangely involved verse of an entirely alien civilization. It is the metrical forms which Platen, Heine, Rückert and Bodenstedt have made so familiar to German readers, and which German poets even to-day are assiduously cultivating. Although Goethe did not go into any such minute study of Oriental prosody as, for instance, Rückert, yet he was in this field, as in many other departments of literary labor, the path-breaking pioneer.

Another work which, though seemingly unassuming, gained, in the course of time, much importance for the intellectual life of Germany, was the "Italian Journey," which was given to the public in 1817. Altogether this collection of letters, containing only the simplest and most direct descriptions of what the writer saw, differs widely from every other description of Italy that has ever been published. It has no fine writing, and makes no pretentious display of knowledge. But for all that it is a model of good style. The words are absolutely transparent, and serve no purpose but to convey an accurate idea of the objects described. The marvellously

many-sided knowledge of the author, and, above all, his wholesome and universal curiosity, are highly impressive. A fact, whether it belong to the realm of art or of nature, or of political history, commands his immediate interest. He has, at all times and in all places, a strong, healthful appetite for facts. On the Lido, near Venice, he sits and contemplates with a fascinated gaze the phenomena of marine life; with exactly the same devotion he listens to the responsive song of the fishermen across the lagoons, or studies the architecture of Palladio and the paintings of Rafael and Titian. The Adriatic, with its blue isles reflected in the sun-bathed waves, furnishes him with a setting for the Homeric epics, and Homeric life becomes clear to him, by analogy, from the study of the physical conditions of the old *Magna Græcia*. In every direction his comment is pregnant with new meaning. He throws out, with heedless prodigality, seed-corns of thought, and they fall into good soil and bear fruit a hundred and a thousand fold in the distant future.

Of Goethe's other autobiographical works, "Truth and Fiction" is the most important. The title is significant, because it implies that the author does not mean to tie himself down to the narration of the mere barren details of his life, but reserves for himself the right of artistic arrangement and poetical interpretation. It has, indeed, been proved that he has now and again reversed the sequence of events, where a more poetic effect could be attained, at the expense of the true chronology. It was his purpose

[to emphasize the organic coherence of his life; its continuous and unbroken development, according to certain laws which presided over his destiny. His father and mother (upon whom he bestows the minutest description) being what they were, and the environment of his early life (which he likewise depicts with the most painstaking exactness) being what it was, it was natural and necessary that he should become what he was. This seems to be the sum and moral of the whole. Law and organic evolution were the watchwords of his life. All that was accidental and appeared miraculous interested him only as an incentive to find in it the hidden law. So in every science which he approached his touch seemed creative—it brought order out of chaos. The slow and beautiful processes of the earth's cooling and preparation for the habitation of living creatures, the gradual growth and decay of the mountains, and the uses of all these agencies in the grand cosmic economy—these were things which in the latter half of his career most profoundly absorbed him. He loved to gather about him scientific specialists, and to hear from them the latest results of their investigations. As his isolation in Weimar grew more complete, he came to depend almost entirely upon such company as he could find in travelling artists and scientists. As an instance of his interest in scientific questions, an anecdote related by his friend Soret is highly characteristic. In the first days of August, 1830, Weimar was agitated by the intelligence which had just arrived from

Paris of the breaking out of the July Revolution. Soret hurried to Goethe to discuss the political situation with him. The moment Goethe saw him he exclaimed: "Well, what do you think of this great event? The volcano has at last come to eruption; everything is in flames, and there is no longer any question of debate behind closed doors."

"It is a terrible story," answered Soret, "but what was to be expected under such conditions and with such a ministry, except that it would have to end with the expulsion of the royal family?"

Goethe stared in the utmost astonishment. "We seem to misunderstand each other, my dear," he said, after a moment's pause; "I am not talking of those people. What interests me is quite a different affair. I am referring to the quarrel which has just broken out in the Academy between Cuvier and Geoffroy St. Hilaire, which is of the utmost significance to science. The matter is of the highest importance," he continued, after another pause, "and you can have no idea of the feelings which the session of July 19th has aroused in me. We have now in St. Hilaire a mighty ally for a long time to come. . . . The best of all, however, is that the synthetic treatment of nature, introduced by him in France, can now no more be overthrown."

It is to me a most sublime trait, this lofty scientific absorption. Wars and revolutions and expulsions of kings are of small consequence compared to the great eternal laws which hold the planets in their spheres, and guide the progressive march of God's

vast creation. Cuvier held that a series of violent catastrophes had taken place in the earth's history, sharply separating each geologic age from the subsequent and the preceding one. St. Hilaire, on the other hand, defended Goethe's proposition, that the development of the earth and its life had been an uninterrupted sequence of progressive stages. How deeply Goethe felt upon this subject is further evident from his remark to Chancellor von Müller: "About æsthetic matters everyone may think and feel as he likes, but in natural science the false and the absurd are absolutely unendurable." "This friend," he remarked on the same occasion, referring to Alexander von Humboldt, who, as he thought, had given undue weight to volcanic agencies, "has, in fact, never had any higher method; only much common sense, zeal, and persistence."

Goethe's attitude toward politics, and particularly toward the efforts of his countrymen to throw off the Napoleonic yoke, has been the subject of much heated controversy. The fact is, he was a German only in name; because the German nationality was in his day not yet resuscitated. In the free city of Frankfort, where Goethe spent his childhood and early youth, there existed no such feeling as national pride and patriotism. A kind of local town-feeling was quite pronounced, and Goethe had his share of it. But the miserable separatistic policy of the petty German princes had begun to bear fruit long ago, and had extinguished all sense of responsibility to the empire at large and all devotion to the com-

mon nationality. Where there is no national life there can be no patriotism. It is responsibility which engenders devotion. When, finally, Napoleon's tyranny awakened this sentiment in the hearts of the scattered and dismembered nation, Goethe was too old to be affected by it. "Shake your fetters," he exclaimed to his struggling country men, "you cannot break them. The man is too strong for you."

That such language was resented by a bleeding people, fighting for its existence, is not to be wondered at. At the same time the apparent indifference of Goethe was not as serious a reflection upon his character as his friends then assumed. He was essentially a child of the eighteenth century, and had imbibed its individualism. All he demanded of the state was the right to pursue his own avocations in peace; and anything that broke in upon his literary and scientific meditation (even though it were a war of liberation) he was apt to resent as an intrusion. In 1806, when, after the battle of Jena, the French plundered Weimar and the grenadiers stormed into his bedroom, he had a taste of the tribulations of war, and a deep horror of its terrific waste of life and barbarizing influence took possession of him. He stood no longer then, as he did in the campaign in France in 1792, watching the bursting shells with a purely scientific interest, taking down his observations in his note-book. The fiery rain was no longer a mere experiment in optics.

Goethe has somewhere remarked, that all his

writings are one continued confession. His life entered into his work ; every experience became transfused into his very life-blood, and gained in time a poetic expression. Only war remained so repugnant to him that he nowhere felt called upon to interpret the emotion which it aroused.

"How could I take up arms," he said to Soret, "without hatred ? and how could I hate without youth ? If such an emergency had befallen me when I was twenty years old, I should certainly not have been the last . . . To write military songs and sit in my room ! That, for sooth, was my duty ! To have written them in the bivouac, while the horses of the enemy's outposts are heard neighing in the night, would have been well enough ! . . . But I am no warlike nature, and have no warlike sense ; war-songs would have been a mask which would have fitted my face badly. I have never affected anything in poetry. I have never uttered anything, which I have not experienced, and which has not urged me to production. I have composed love-songs when I loved. How could I write songs of hate without hating ?"

I have already alluded to the fact that Goethe in his old age found himself isolated from the society of friends and neighbors. Altogether, his relations with his great contemporaries need a word of comment. His friendship with Schiller, as we have seen, remained uninterrupted to the end ; and with Wieland, who was a cheerful, easy-going epicurean, he also remained on amicable terms. But Wieland

had never been very near to him ; and a friendly acquaintance will take care of itself much more easily than a closer intimacy. With Herder, on the other hand, who in natural endowment was a worthier rival to Goethe than the prolific author of "Oberon," he had many misunderstandings which, finally, after the Vulpius affair, led to a lasting alienation. Herder was, with all his great qualities, testy and irritable, and could not conquer a certain envy of Goethe. He had largely influenced Goethe's intellectual life, and therefore resented his pupil's tendency to grow above his head. That he protested against Goethe's *liaison* is certainly to his honor ; and Goethe would have saved himself and his posterity much unhappiness had he heeded Herder's advice. On the whole, it is obvious that Goethe, as he grew to his full intellectual stature, no longer desired relations of personal intimacy. He valued this friend for his proficiency in this branch of knowledge, and that friend for his proficiency in another ; but he took pains, as it were, to confine each man to his own department, in which he was likely to be useful and interesting. Even men with blots upon their reputations he invited to his house, if he had respect for their acquirements. But let them beware, if they desired to continue on an amicable footing, not to stray beyond their respective departments. Even in his relation to the duke, Karl August, Goethe maintained in later years a reserve, which so old and tried a friend might have felt justified in resenting. But the duke understood Goethe, and thought

his attitude natural. He found him a useful and highly ornamental figure in his small duchy; and did everything in his power to further the objects for which he lived. Perhaps he even liked the stately reserve of the old poet. "As genuine *grands seigneurs*," says Grimm, "they walked side by side, and the distance which separated them was exactly to their tastes. . . . From having been friends Goethe and the Duke became allies."

During the last years of his life it was chiefly the second part of "Faust" and his periodical "For Art and Antiquity" which occupied Goethe. Like the aged Faust, he marched serenely toward the Valley of the Shadow of Death, cheerfully awaiting whatever fate there might be in store for him:

"Yes, let me dare those gates to fling asunder,
Which every man would fain go slinking by!
'Tis time through deeds this word of truth to thunder:
That with the height of gods man's dignity may vie!
Nor from that gloomy gulf to shrink affrighted
Where Fancy damns herself to self-wrought woes.

Upon this step with cheerful heart resolving,
If even into naught the risk were of dissolving." *

His activity was as many-sided and unwearied as in his most vigorous manhood. Not only the scientific, but also the literary currents of thought in all civilized lands he watched with the liveliest interest. So great was the elasticity of his mind, that he was

* Faust, Part I.

in his old age capable of appreciating what was good in the Romantic school, in spite of his former dislike and his diametrically opposed intellectual tendency. The reactionary spirit of the Romanticists, and their enthusiasm for the Middle Ages, remained as repugnant to Goethe as ever; and their morbid mysticism and predilection for Catholicism did not commend them to one to whom the cheerful sensuousness and innate saneness of the Greek civilization had always strongly appealed. But the efforts of the Romantic authors to revive the feeling for native art seemed to him praiseworthy; and Sulpiz Boisseree, who was laboring earnestly for the restoration of the Cologne Cathedral, succeeded in convincing him of the national importance of his undertaking. The drawings and paintings of Albrecht Dürer also began to impress him, and his attitude toward the Middle Ages underwent a gradual change.

As the years progressed, the effects of Goethe's activity began to be felt also in foreign lands, and he watched with interest and gratification his growing influence in every domain of human knowledge. Particularly in France, a school of rising authors, which also assumed the title of Romantic, strove through its organ, *The Globe*, to establish his authority beyond the Rhine. Although undoubtedly with the ulterior object of gaining a mighty ally against their enemies at home—the Academicians—these men, among whom Quinet, Ampère, and Prosper Mérimée were the most prominent, paid their homage to the German poet, and, in spite of

their defective comprehension of the spirit of his teachings, contributed not a little toward bringing his writings to the notice of the French public. In England also his writings were published, and commented upon with more or less intelligence in newspapers and reviews. Carlyle translated "*Wilhelm Meister*," Walter Scott "*Götz von Berlichingen*" (1799), and Byron borrowed his ideas with his usual nonchalance. In Italy, too, he gained many admirers, and entertained a desultory correspondence with Manzoni. The ready recognition which he thus found on all hands gradually developed in him the idea of a world literature, which, independently of race and country, should appeal to the highest sense of excellence which the most cultured in all countries have in common. He had himself gathered the chief intellectual currents of his age, and made them pulsate through his own being. National differences and conflicting interests, which drew the peoples apart, seemed to him of small consequence compared to the great and abiding interests which all mankind has in common. Truth has no nationality, and a great thought is great in whatever language it is uttered. In the upper regions of the intellect men meet merely as men—as poets, thinkers, scientists—and all accidental distinctions of party, rank, and nationality vanish. The ancient Greeks, who were the only people whose culture had been founded upon this universally human basis, would always remain authorities in matters of art. They were not to be

imitated, however, but the spirit of their work, if properly comprehended, would stimulate the modern poet and artist to noble and independent creation.

Thus, in brief, was Goethe's poetic creed. His prophecy of the world-literature is, however, yet far from fulfilment.

During the last years of Goethe's life death reaped a rich harvest among those who were dearest to him. In June, 1828, died his oldest friend, Duke Karl August. Frau von Stein had died a few years before (1825). But the hardest blow of all was the loss of his only son, August von Goethe, who died in Rome in 1830. His daughter-in-law Ottilia remained his faithful companion and did the honors of his household. She read aloud to him from Plutarch who was one of his favorite authors. To Eckermann he said as he sealed the package containing the completed MS. of "Faust": "Henceforth I look upon my life purely as a gift; it is now really of little consequence what I do."

A few months later (March 22, 1832), as he was seated in his easy-chair, suffering from a slight cold, he expired quietly and without a struggle. His last words were: "Light! more light!"

"The morning after Goethe's death," says Eckermann, "a deep desire seized me to look upon his earthly remains. His faithful servant Frederick opened for me the chamber where he was lying. Stretched upon his back, he reposed as if asleep; profound peace and firmness reigned in the features of his sublime, noble countenance. The mighty

brow seemed yet to harbor thoughts. . . . The body lay naked, only wrapped in a winding-sheet. . . . The servant drew aside the sheet, and I marvelled at the divine magnificence of those limbs. The breast was extraordinarily powerful, broad and arched ; the arms and thighs were full and softly muscular ; the feet shapely and of the purest form ; nowhere on the whole body was there any trace of fat, or leanness, or decay. A perfect man lay in great beauty before me ; and the rapture occasioned by this sight made me forget for a moment that the immortal spirit had left such an abode. I placed my hand on his heart ; there was a deep stillness, and I turned away to give free vent to my suppressed tears."

It is difficult to over-estimate the value of Goethe's work to humanity. The bequest which he left to the world in his writings, and in the whole intellectual result of his life, is not as yet appreciated at its full worth ; because, intellectually, the world has not yet caught up with him. His influence to-day asserts itself in a hundred ways—even where no one suspects it. The century has received the impress of his mighty personality. The intellectual currents of the age, swelled and amplified by later tributaries, flow to-day in the directions which Goethe indicated.

II.

GOETHE AND CARLYLE

THE German Goethe-worship is usually regarded in Great Britain with alien and unsympathetic eyes. It suffices for most English critics that Goethe was not, according to their standard, a good man; that he was not faithful in his relations with women, and that he was not, in the accepted sense, a patriot during his country's struggle to throw off the French yoke. We might as well concede that these charges contain a modicum of truth. As the defence which the Goethe-worshipper would set up would have no weight with the great public, because it would have to appeal to sentiments which belong only to a small minority, it is far better to admit that in his efforts at intellectual enfranchisement Goethe ignored all laws that seemed to interfere with his supreme aim of self-development. An elaborate apology for him, addressed to the English Philistine, has been published by the late George H. Lewes, under the title, "The Life of Goethe," which gives us valuable information as to what George H. Lewes would have done, if he had been Goethe, in the various relations of the latter's life. I know but one Englishman who

understood Goethe, and he (to use Hegel's phrase) misunderstood him; that is, he had vivid glimpses of him, saw him in part very clearly, but in other and very essential respects misapprehended him. That man was Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle, too, commenced in an apologetic tone, but stated more satisfactorily than Lewes the positive contents of his hero's life and the lessons which were to be derived from it. When Bayard Taylor called upon him, a few years before his death, and asked him his opinion of Goethe, he answered with his most rasping Scotch accent: "That man was my salvation." In none of his essays on Goethe has Carlyle so plainly shown what he meant by this strong expression as in the eleventh lecture, on "Periods of European Culture," a most interesting fragment of which is published in Professor Dowden's "Transcripts and Studies." He there gives his conception of the message—the intellectual gospel—which German literature brought him, and which for half a century he tried to explain and to impress upon the British public. But until this day no other prophet has arisen in Great Britain who has thought that gospel worth commenting upon in the same spirit which characterized Carlyle.

The Chelsea sage was by nature a hero worshipper, but so ruthless and self-assertive in his intercourse with his idols that he often remodelled them to suit himself before deeming them worthy of his worship. And so, though he was scarcely aware of it, he made a Goethe of his own who, to be sure, had much in common with the original, but was yet es-

essentially a different being. Rarely was a critical observation wider of the mark than Carlyle's: that Goethe leaves no more trace of himself in his writings than does Shakespeare. Apart from the fact that Goethe has himself remarked that his writings are one continued confession, there is in every one of his novels and dramas a mass of that sort of material which no imagination invents, however ingenious and fertile. There is on every page inferential evidence that we are dealing with more or less thinly disguised autobiography. "*Dichtung und Wahrheit*" was, to be sure, not published (in its completed form) until after Goethe's death, and Carlyle had probably more excuse for his error than a man would have who should repeat it at the present day. But the fact is incontestable that Carlyle's essays contain as much of Carlyle as of Goethe. He was too gnarled and thorny a personality, too little pliable, too bristling with Scotch pugnacity to be a good interpreter of anybody. And from Goethe he was intellectually and spiritually more remote than he dreamed of. How could that modern prophet, full of humility, despair, and fiery denunciation, comprehend the calm and self-poised secularism of the German poet? How could his gloomy Scotch theology be brought into a sympathetic relation with the sunny and cheerful paganism of his hero? Their recently published correspondence, which was expected to furnish a clew to their relations, deals largely with externalities, exchanges of gifts and small courtesies, and comments on books and authors.

Goethe, indeed, is full of friendliness, sends greetings and, what is to me delightfully characteristic, asks for a drawing of Carlyle's house at Craigenputtock, because, he says, he does not like, when he visits his friends in thought, to let his fancy hover in vacuum. He is even particular to know whether the house lies on the right or the left bank of the river Nith. When Carlyle lived in Edinburgh, he writes, he never ventured to imagine his surroundings; for how could he hope "to find a quiet friend in that steeply towering city, which, in spite of frequent pictures, continued to perplex him?" Carlyle, who is visibly touched by this minute interest (which, I fancy, he scarcely attributed to its right source), replies at considerable length and in a freer and more confidential tone than we find in any of his previous letters. Altogether he reveals himself here in a vivid light; and it is a frank, rugged soul of sterling stuff which he shows to the serene, clear-sighted old Jupiter in Weimar. How fine is this, for instance, and what a ring of sincerity there is in it: "I came hither (to Craigenputtock) purely for this one reason: that I might not have to write for bread, might not be tempted to tell lies for money."

And still nobler this passage appears to me in conjunction with what precedes and what follows. The temptation must have presented itself to show the extent of his sacrifice in forsaking the brilliant literary society of Edinburgh and burying himself here on a bleak and melancholy moor fifteen miles from a town and "six miles from any individual

of the formally visiting class." But Carlyle scorns such weakness. He describes Craigenputtock with a desire to show its best side, and he makes the most of such poor attractions as the place affords. How different Craigenputtock appears in the letters of his wife to Miss Stodart, of Edinburgh. There it is described (in the writer's pleasant moods) as being "in the midst of a pretty extensive peat-moor;" and its attractions consist in occasional visits from wild hares and black-cocks; but in her gloomier moments, though she strives to keep a brave heart, she refers to it as "a desert" belonging to "the class of bog and hill scenery, and has little but heath and winstone and peat-pits to recommend it." The following passage in Mrs. Carlyle's letter to Miss Stodard of October 10, 1832, shows plainly what a price her husband paid for his exemption from the necessity of writing for bread and "the temptation to tell lies for money:"

"The grim prospect of another winter in this solitude is too frightful for my husband, who finds that it is absolutely essential, for carrying on not only his craft, but his existence, to hear from time to time a little human speech."

Under such circumstances the frequent letters and messages from Goethe must have been doubly grateful. In recalling, forty years later, the joy he experienced at the receipt of one of these Olympian missives (of June 25, 1829), he expresses himself in this wise: "Pure white the fine big sheet itself, still purer and nobler the meaning, all in it as if mutely

pointing to eternity; letter fit to be read in such a place and time." But unless Carlyle was exalted above all human vanities, this very letter must have wounded his literary pride by its omission of any reference to his essay in *The Foreign Review*, which he had sent to Goethe with many apologies, to be sure, for his defective knowledge, but yet obviously expecting some acknowledgment. But it is significant to note that in every instance Goethe refrains from direct comment upon his friend's writings concerning himself. He makes his convenient factotum Eckermann acknowledge the receipt of such documents and expatiate upon their excellence without in the least committing his superior. Thus it is Eckermann who praises Carlyle's non-committal essay on "Helena," in which he gives a clear and coherent account of the plot of the "Classico - Romantic Phantasmagoria," but carefully refrains from dropping a hint as to its meaning. It is Eckermann, too, who encourages Carlyle to undertake an English translation of "Faust," although it is not likely that he would have made such a proposition on his own responsibility. It is a matter for congratulation that Carlyle knew the limitations of his talent too well to act upon this advice. For though Lord Leveson Gower's translation (of which Eckermann complains) is bad, there is very little ground for believing that Carlyle's would have been better. His specimen translations of "Helena" have a gnarled Saxon ruggedness which is as far as possible removed from the

pure plasticity and sculpturesque clearness of the original.

More satisfactory than the discourse on "Helena" is the essay on "Goethe" in *The Foreign Review*, the receipt of which Eckermann acknowledges with the diplomatic observation that "it has aroused great interest in Germany." Carlyle here intends to explain to the British public the character and significance of Goethe's life and manifold activity. It is obvious in the very first sentences that he is conscious of the magnitude of his task. There is something dreadfully labored and clumsily apologetic in these introductory remarks :

"It is not on this second portion of Goethe's works, which, at any rate, contains nothing new to us, that we mean at present to dwell. In our last number we engaged to make some survey of his writings and character in general, and must now endeavor, with such insight as we have, to fulfil that promise. We have already said that we reckoned this no unimportant subject, and few of Goethe's readers need to be reminded that it is no easy one. We hope also that our pretensions in regard to it are not exorbitant," etc.

To begin in this style an essay on the greatest poet of the century, the most splendidly equipped intellect of modern times, if not of all times, strikes one to-day as almost comical. But it would be unjust to the essayist to judge him by the light of our present knowledge. He, no doubt, felt the necessity of apologizing to his spiritually insulated coun-

trymen for occupying their time and attention with the claims of a mere German to be regarded as one of the great luminaries in the realm of thought. How, conceding the fact that Goethe was neither an Englishman nor an ancient Greek, could Carlyle have the presumption to set forth such claims and eloquently defend them? He feels in every line the weight, if not the justice, of such a query, and he sets to work bravely to clear away the thorny underbrush of prejudice which obscures his subject from view. We learn incidentally that Goethe's works, in such fragmentary translations as had appeared, had not been a success in England, and that particularly the autobiography had given offence in not being sufficiently "gentlemanly."

"The chief ground of offence seemed to be that the story was not noble enough; that it entered on details of too poor and private a nature; verged here and there toward garrulity; was not, in one word, written in the style of what we call a *gentleman*."

Oh, how well we know it, that stupid, stolid, contemptuous, purblind British superciliousness, which will recognize nothing as good or admirable, unless it be arrayed in British garb, unless it conform to John Bull's narrow Philistine ideal! Goethe not a gentleman—the stately Olympian Goethe, against whom the chief grievance of his countrymen was that he was unapproachable, uncommunicative! But in Germany the idea of a gentleman dispenses with the tall stone wall of reserve, with broken bottles on the top. A German gentleman need not

(unless he be a military man) pretend to despise all creation, and may unbend, nay be positively agreeable, without loss of dignity. That admirable British "you-be-damnedness," of which our transatlantic cousins are so proud, is on the continent of Europe held to be a disqualification for the title of a gentleman. It is there ignorantly supposed that the faculty to put people at their ease, to make social intercourse smooth and pleasant, is the mark of high breeding; and that the brutal desire to humiliate, to impress our neighbor with our own grandeur, is, on the whole, a puerile quality unworthy of a civilized man. Carlyle, however, had to reckon with the national ideals as he found them. He had no time to change them, even if he had the power; though, as his subsequent career shows, he did not lack courage for such an Herculean undertaking.

It is indeed easy to imagine the disgust of English upper clubdom at the emotional redundancy and extravagance of Goethe's Werther period; and it is not surprising that Carlyle should have felt it incumbent upon him to defend his hero. His defence, however, does not seem to me to hit the nail on the head. "Goethe," he says, "was not writing to 'persons of quality' in England, but to persons of heart and head in Europe: a somewhat different problem perhaps and requiring a somewhat different solution."

More to the point is his query, whether "the style of a man" and that of an English gentleman are necessarily coincident or even compatible, and

what might be their relative worth and preferableness.

How deeply he is concerned to acquit his hero of the charge of ungentlemanliness is obvious from the fact that he returns to it in dealing with "Wilhelm Meister," which the English reviewers had pronounced "vulgar."

"No gentleman, we hear in certain circles, could have written it; few real gentlemen, it is insinuated, can like to read it; no real lady, unless possessed of considerable courage, should profess having read it at all."

This is an awful state of affairs, surely. But Carlyle's manner of disposing of it does not seem to us greatly to mend it. Of Goethe's gentility, he says, he will leave people to speak who have the faintest knowledge of him; and as for the gentility of his readers, he will only state that the late Queen of Prussia found much consolation in reading the book. And Sir Walter Scott, who was surely a judge of gentility, had given her a certificate of character in his "Life of Napoleon," where anyone who chose might find it. This, it appears to us, would be most excellent fooling, if the writer were not so sadly and comically serious.

It is a matter of great interest to observe what phases of Goethe's many-sided character and activity Carlyle has most clearly apprehended and elucidated, and what phases he has misapprehended or ignored. His first vital comment strikes a full chord. He sees very plainly the grandeur of Goethe's aim

to develop harmoniously his physical, intellectual, and moral powers :

"He is neither noble nor plebeian, neither liberal nor servile, nor infidel, nor devotee ; but the best excellence of all these joined in pure union—a clear, universal *man*. Goethe's poetry is no separate faculty, no mental handicraft ; but the voice of the whole harmonious manhood."

That this is the fundamental chord of that richly and melodiously varied composition which we call Goethe's life is beyond dispute. But when Carlyle comes to analyze the tones which enter into this full-sounding and beautifully complex chord, he adds a note of his own devising which surely is not found in his theme. In speaking of Goethe's transition from the turbulent sentimental period, of which "The Sorrows of Werther" is the monument, to the period of clarified strength and active manhood, of which "Wilhelm Meister" is the completest expression, he makes the following observations :

"For Goethe had not only suffered and mourned in bitter agony of spirit under the spiritual perplexities of his time, but he has also mastered these ; he is above them, and has shown others how to rise above them. At one time we found him in darkness, and now he is in light ; *he was once an unbeliever, and now he is a believer* ; and he believes, moreover, not by denying his unbelief, but by following it out ; not by stopping short, still less turning back in his inquiries, but by resolutely prosecut-

ing them. . . . How has the *belief of a saint* been united in this high and true mind with the clearness of a sceptic, the devoutness of a Fénelon made to blend in soft harmony with the gayety, the sarcasm, the shrewdness of a Voltaire ? ”

That this passage is widely astray no student of Goethe will need to be told. To attribute to the serene old pagan in Weimar “the belief of a saint” and “the devoutness of a Fénelon” betrays a radical misapprehension of his character which must detract from the value of all that Carlyle has written about him. To the young Scot who had breathed the religious atmosphere of Puritanism from his childhood, and with the deep earnestness of his nature pondered and discussed theological questions at the fireside in his father’s cottage, the calm tolerance (not to say indifference) of Goethe concerning heavenly things was simply incomprehensible. He felt a strong need to admire this man, to worship him, and by an unconscious distortion of meanings he found in his writings that which he wished to find. Nay, he did more. He infused much of his own devout spirit into his English translations of Goethe’s verses. Take, for instance, this, in his essay on “Goethe’s Works,” in *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. 19. The German reads :

“ Wie das Gestirn,
Ohne Hast
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last.”

Which Carlyle renders :

“ Like as a star,
That maketh not haste,
That taketh not rest,
Be each one fulfilling
His God-given hest.”

Though much may be forgiven a man who translates verse into verse, so flagrant a distortion of meaning is surely reprehensible. There is nothing about “God-given hest” in the original, or anything remotely bordering on it. What Goethe says, retaining throughout the verse the image of the star, is, literally :

“Like as a star, without haste, but without rest, let each revolve about his own weight,” i.e., the pole or axis of his own personality.* But Carlyle abandons the poetic image, unless, indeed, by God-given hest he means the prescribed sphere, to which by the law of gravitation the star is confined, and in which it is made to revolve.

This is a case in point ; and we might recall more, though none quite so striking. The assertion that

* Professor J. S. Blackie translates and amplifies the verse a trifle in his “Wisdom of Goethe”:

“ Like the star
That shines afar,
Without haste
And without rest,
Let each man wheel, with steady sway,
Round the task that rules the day,
And do his best.”

Goethe became a believer by following out his unbelief, by resolutely prosecuting his inquiries to their logical conclusions, has, at first blush, a very mystical look ; but must be intended to mean that religion will endure the test of scientific inquiry and that Goethe arrived at belief in supernatural things by logical reasoning and painstaking investigation of natural things. Without pronouncing upon the possibility of such a process, we cannot but marvel at its being predicated of Goethe ; for if there is one thing which Goethe lacks completely it is this very devoutness which Carlyle, with a singular persistence, attributes to him. How could a devout believer write, for instance, a passage like this (in the second part of "Faust") ?

"The sphere of earth is known enough to me,
The view above is barred immutably ;
A fool who there his blinking eyes directeth,
And o'er the clouds of peers a place expecteth,
Firm let him stand and look around him well !
This world means something to the capable ;
Why needs he through eternity to wend ?
Here he acquires what he can comprehend." *

* Taylor's translation. The fact that this passage was not published at the time when Carlyle wrote scarcely invalidates the argument, for after the publication of the completed Faust, when writing his final essay on Goethe's Works, Carlyle repeats substantially his earlier opinion. "In his third or final period" he says, "Reverence becomes triumphant ; a deep, all-pervading faith, with a mild voice, grave or gay, speaks forth to us in a Meister's Wanderjahre, in a Westöstliche Divan."

The sentiment here expressed is not a mere isolated utterance, but is deeply characteristic of Goethe during his third and most mature period. Here are a few quotations from his conversations with Eckermann, which are all in the same vein and which correctly represent his religious views :

"Religion stands in the same relation to art as any other higher interest of life. It is only to be regarded as material and has exactly the same rights as any other material."

"They are now shaking up the five books of Moses, and if criticism is injurious anywhere, it is in matters of religion ; for here everything rests upon faith, *to which no man can return, if once he has lost it.*"

"It is like drinking out the ocean to undertake an historical and critical investigation (of the contradictions of the gospels). It is far better, without further ado, to hold fast to that which is really there and to appropriate that which we can use for our moral culture and strengthening."

"It is natural for man to regard himself as the crown of creation and to view all other creatures only in their relation to himself and in so far as they are adapted to his use and service. He takes possession of the vegetable and animal world, and while he devours other creatures as fit nourishment for himself, he acknowledges his God and praises His goodness in thus providing for him with fatherly care. He deprives the cow of her milk, the bee of its honey, the sheep of its wool, and as he finds all these things useful for his own purposes, he straight-

way concludes that they were created for these purposes. Nay, he cannot imagine that even the smallest weed exists except for him, and if he has not up to date discovered its use, he takes it for granted that he will in future surely discover it. . . . The apostles of utility would fancy that they had lost their God if they were not to adore Him who gave the ox his horns in order that he might defend himself. I, however, may be permitted to revere Him, who in the abundance of His creation was so great that, after a thousand plants, He made one in which all the others are contained, and after a thousand kinds of animals made one which contains all the rest, viz., *man*. Let them revere Him who provides the cattle with its fodder and man with food and drink as much as he can enjoy ; but I adore Him who has deposited in the world such a vast productive energy that if only a millionth part of it enters into existence the world swarms with creatures, so that war, pestilence, flood, and fire can make no impression upon it. That is my God."

"Now, a man may well be a great connoisseur in human affairs, as it is perfectly conceivable that he may have made the art and the knowledge of a master completely his own ; *but in divine things a being who could do this would have to be the peer of the Supreme Being himself*. Nay, *if God were to deliver and reveal unto us such mysteries, we should not be able to comprehend them*, and should not know what to do with them ; and we should again resemble that ignoramus in the picture, to whom the master could not, with

all his explanations, communicate even the premises according to which he judges. In this respect it is, therefore, entirely right that all religions have not been given directly by God himself, but that they, being the work of excellent men, are adapted to the needs and the comprehension of a large number of their like. If they were the work of God himself no one would comprehend them ; but being the work of man they do not express the inexpressible." . . .

"Christ, conceived of an only God, to whom He attributed all the qualities which He felt in himself as perfections. God became the very essence of His own beautiful soul, full of goodness and love like himself, and entirely adapted to have good men confidently give themselves up to Him and cherish this idea as the sweetest bond with heaven."

Now, whatever this may be, it is surely not Christianity. The "pestilential fever of scepticism" which, as Carlyle says, "had run through its stages in Goethe's life," and was "happily ended," obviously endured to the last, if by scepticism we mean, according to the definition of "The Century Dictionary," doubt or disbelief of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. That Goethe was not an atheist, or in the modern sense, an agnostic, is plain from the above quotations and from many equally pregnant passages in his "Correspondence with Schiller." He did not profess not to know whether there was a God, but he rejected all anthropomorphic notions of God, asserting that they were useful, but that his conception of God derived from the

study of His works was so infinitely greater, and yet as infinitely removed from any completely true and adequate idea, as the earth is from heaven. In this sense he may be said to have had reverence; not the reverence which impels to blind acceptance and makes one shrink from investigation, but that reverence which recognizes with cheerfulness our own place in and relation to the universe and the infinitely great and inconceivable Being who must be its author. This mental attitude appears to have been beyond Carlyle's comprehension, or he would surely not have characterized it by such misleading phrases as "the devoutness of a Fénelon," or "the belief of a saint." A scarcely less radical misconception of Goethe's spirit is implied in the sentence, attributing to him "the gayety and the sarcasm, the shrewdness of a Voltaire."

Although we may have pursued this inquiry far enough, we cannot refrain from illustrating by a few more instances the kind of forced and violent interpretation to which Carlyle subjects the writings of his hero. We may freely admit that he did not have at his command the material which enables the Goethe critic of to-day to view the great man in all the manifold phases of his activity, and to profit by the labors of a host of predecessors. Eckermann's "Conversations" were not published until 1836, and Riemer's "Communications" not until 1841. It is a difficult thing to determine how much we may ourselves be indebted to these direct and highly illuminative utterances of the master for our insight

into his character and opinions. But even making due allowance for the disadvantages under which he labored, we believe that Carlyle has displayed more of personal good-will than of critical sagacity in his interpretation of the works of Goethe. His disquisition on "Werther" and "Wilhelm Meister," to which allusion has been made, is full of passion and stormy eloquence, and is, independently of its subject, a magnificent piece of writing. A writer who is so overbrimming with urgent and positive opinions will, as a rule, do well to express himself directly, *in propria persona*, and not through the medium of a criticism of somebody else. It is not because he was too small, but because he was too great a man, that Carlyle proves himself a bad interpreter. He is always interesting, always instructive, but not always right. Thus, when he professes to find confirmation of his view of Goethe as a reverent believer, in the Second Part of "Wilhelm Meister," he simply substitutes his own opinions for those of Goethe. He quotes, at great length, the passage in which Wilhelm goes with his son Felix to the three mysterious sages, for the purpose of entrusting to them the boy's education. He finds a profound significance in the three symbolic gestures which the children are taught, inculcating reverence for the things above, the things below, and for themselves, the highest of which is the last named. These three kinds of reverence are said to constitute in their union "the true Religion." But that this "true religion" is not Christianity or anything closely akin

to it, is demonstrated by the very passages which Carlyle quotes in corroboration of his view :

"In your historical series," said he [Wilhelm], "I find a chasm. You have destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem, and dispersed the people, yet you have not introduced the Divine Man who taught there shortly before ; to whom, shortly before, they would give no ear."

"To have done this, as you require it, would have been an error. The life of that divine man, whom you allude to, stands in no connection with the general history of the world in his time. It was a private life ; his teaching was a teaching for individuals. What has publicly befallen vast masses of people, and the minor parts composing them, belongs to the general history of the world, to the general religion of the world, the Religion we have named the First. What inwardly befalls individuals, belongs to the Second Religion, the Philosophical. Such a religion was it that Christ taught and practised, so long as he went about on earth. For this reason the external here closes, and I now open to you the internal."

This is only introductory ; but as such essential to the comprehension of what follows. The point we wish to make is emphasized in the subsequent discourse of the Elder, who, as every Goethe scholar will admit, is but the mouthpiece of the author's own conviction :

"We have entirely disjoined that sublime man's life from its termination. In life he appears as a

true philosopher—let not the expression stagger us—as a wise man in the highest sense. . . . And thus to the noble portion of mankind, his walk and conversation are even more instructive and profitable than his death, for to those trials everyone is called ; to this trial but few.”

“Permit me one question,” said Wilhelm. “As you have set up the life of the divine man for a pattern and example, have you likewise selected his sufferings, his death, as a model of exalted patience?”

“Undoubtedly we have,” replied the Eldest. “Of this we make no secret, but we draw a veil over those sufferings, even because we reverence them so highly. We hold it a damnable audacity to bring forth that torturing cross, and the Holy One who suffers on it, or to expose them to the light of the sun which hid its face when a reckless world forced such a sight on it ; to take these mysterious secrets, in which the divine depth of sorrow lies hid, and play with them, fondle them, trick them out, and rest not till the most reverend of all solemnities appears vulgar and paltry.”

Goethe's repugnance to suffering, pain, and sorrow was one of his most marked characteristics. It was a limitation of his nature which he inherited from his cheerful, pleasure-loving mother. He habitually took the most circuitous route to avoid the disagreeable. When sorrows befell him, he resorted to every means in his power to banish the thought of them. He never faced them, grappled with them,

and experienced the wholesome, though bitter, discipline of pain. But he fled from them. When his son died, no one for a long time dared by any allusion to remind him of his loss. In a letter to Zelter he spoke of his son's "remaining away" (*ausbleiben*), which, he said, had distressed him. In all similar situations, he resorted to similar expedients. His well-known dislike of the crucifixion, and of all pictorial representations of the suffering Christ, was but another symptom of this deep-rooted temperamental abhorrence of all that jarred upon (what appeared to him) the rich and serene harmony of existence. Because Christianity addresses its message primarily to the suffering humanity and regards suffering, not as mere discord, but as a purifying and ennobling discipline, it could never be the religion of Goethe. It did not appeal to any deep need of his nature; and therefore could not be valued at its supreme worth.

This is, in our opinion, the one glaring inadequacy in his presentation of life. With the exception of two scenes in "Faust," where he rises to a height which he nowhere else attains, his pictures of pain, sorrow, and contrition are comparatively pale, lacking in depth and vigor. As he himself said to Eckermann, he had too conciliatory a nature to be a good dramatist; but his real deficiency as a dramatist is only hinted at in this confession. It lies rather in his systematic ignoring of the darker and harsher phases of existence—his lack of experience and temperamental avoidance of what, to the great

majority of mankind, must remain the sternest, deepest problem.

It is because of his failure to apprehend this limitation of Goethe's nature that Carlyle has unconsciously distorted his likeness. Carlyle was himself so largely gifted with reverence, and approached his heroes in so reverential an attitude, that to detect a flaw in them would have appeared to him as a species of disloyalty. As he praised Goethe's "Helena" for its obscurity—its "vague, fluctuating, fitful adumbration of many [things]"—so he did not scruple to extol his very faults into virtues. Though we may not, in our critical capacity, admire such partisanship, we freely admit that there is something fine and sturdy about it which, in its human aspect, is more beautiful than cool, sagacious impartiality. Carlyle refers frequently to Goethe as his teacher, and in one of his letters he styles himself his pupil. His sense of gratitude to his great German master made him unable and unwilling to apply a critical microscope to his possible defects. He was under too great a debt of gratitude to find any zest in that kind of employment. Goethe loomed up on his horizon too grand, too colossal, to be measured by the petty inch-measure which we apply to ordinary men. Such carping, cold-blooded, unsympathetic analysis as we find, for instance, in the essay of M. Edmond Scherer on Goethe, would have filled Carlyle with wrath. And even the nicely-adjusted and discriminating apothecary's scales of Matthew Arnold, so evenly balanced by a hair's weight between

praise and blame, he would have felt tempted to smash with one blow of his rugged Scotch fist. And to account for this attitude of warm and pugnacious fealty, let me quote from the above-named Thirteenth Lecture on "Periods of Culture," where Carlyle states with beautiful frankness the reason of his indebtedness to Goethe.

"To explain, I can only think of the revelation, for I can call it no other, that these men (Goethe and Schiller) made to me. It was to me like the rising of a light in the darkness which lay around and threatened to swallow me up. I was then in the very midst of Wertherism, the blackness and darkness of death. There was one thing which particularly struck me in Goethe. It is in his 'Wilhelm Meister.' He had been describing an association of all sorts of people of talent, formed to receive propositions and give responses to them. . . . A number of applications for advice were daily made to the association, which were answered thus and thus; but . . . *many people wrote in particular for recipes for happiness, all that . . . was laid on the shelf, and not answered at all.* Now, this thing gave me great surprise when I read it. 'What!' I said, 'is it not a recipe of happiness that I have been seeking all my life, and isn't it precisely because I have failed in finding it that I am now miserable and discontented?' Had I supposed, as some people do, that Goethe was fond of paradoxes, . . . I had certainly rejected it without further trouble, but I couldn't think it. At length, after

turning it up for a great while in my own mind, I got to see that it was true what he said—that it was the thing that all the world was in error in. No man has a right to ask for a recipe for happiness, there is something better than that. All kinds of men who have done great things—priests, prophets, sages—have had in them something higher than the love of happiness to guide them, spiritual clearness and perfection—a far better thing than happiness. Love of happiness is but a kind of hunger at the best, a craving because I have not enough of sweet provision in this world. If I am asked what that higher thing is, I cannot at once make answer, I am afraid of causing mistake. There is no name I can give it that is not to be questioned. . . . There is no name for it, but pity for that heart which does not feel it. There is no good volition in that heart. This higher thing was once named the Cross of Christ—not a happy thing that, surely.”

Here we have again the persistent infusion of alien and personal sentiment. That “*Wilhelm Meister*” should have led anyone to the Cross of Christ is certainly one of the most startling paradoxes of this master of paradox. A hint of Goethe concerning the impossibility of furnishing a recipe for happiness, and its futility if furnished, starts a new and, as it appears, profitable train of thought in Carlyle’s mind, which becomes the nucleus of his new philosophy of life. “*Wilhelm Meister*,” as has been said, started out, like Saul, to find his father’s asses, and he found a kingdom. His manifold experiences

taught him that happiness is not found by him who goes in search of it, but comes, if it comes at all, through unselfish absorption in labor for the good of mankind. That was a great lesson, surely, and one for which Carlyle had every reason to be grateful to Goethe. It is perhaps also, in a sense, the lesson conveyed by the Cross of Christ. But why should Carlyle, who had wrestled with the Lord in prayer and doubt and agony of spirit from his youth up—who had been the bosom friend of the fanatical preacher Irving—why should he have to go to Goethe for that familiar lesson—particularly as Goethe was not aware of having taught it in the sense in which Carlyle interpreted it?

This experience, however, is not so strange as we may fancy. This is not the first instance in which an author has taught a lesson which he had not himself learned. And it is not only here, but in many instances, that his pupil adds, out of the abundance of his own rich nature, decorative touches to his master's likeness, and infuses into it something of his own fervent spirit.

There is no shrinking, then, from the conclusion that Carlyle's Goethe is not the serene, gravely-plastic, vigilantly-observant, self-poised, and essentially pagan sage of Weimar. A very noble and beautiful character he is, and to many, perhaps, more beautiful than his original. Of this each man must judge according to his own prejudice and predilection. But it is undeniable that, whether true or not, this modified Goethe has played a great part in English

literature, and a great debt of gratitude England owes to Carlyle for having introduced him. The widening of her intellectual horizon, which this new outlook into the German realm of thought brought with it, has had many beneficial results. It made a breach in the wall of insular prejudice and opened avenues for the influx of new culture. The saying of Novalis, that every Englishman is an island, is less true to-day than it was seventy years ago. And it is in a measure due to Thomas Carlyle that such is the case.

III.

THE ENGLISH ESTIMATE OF GOETHE

THE German novelist Berthold Auerbach coined the word "Goethe-ripe," by which he designated the degree of intellectual maturity enabling one to comprehend the significance of Goethe's life and works. By this test I should say that the British public is not "Goethe-ripe." The spirit that animates Goethe is very far removed from that which dominates English literature, past and present. Not that I mean this as a reflection upon English literature, but merely as an interesting phenomenon. That unbiassed recognition of all that is good and beautiful, that Olympian serenity of soul and catholicity of judgment which characterized Goethe, arouse, as a rule, not admiration, but animosity, in England. At the English universities a Goethe student is as rare as a white blackbird. And I venture to say that intelligent, sympathetic study of Goethe could scarcely flourish in that atmosphere of semi-ecclesiastical mediævalism which yet hangs, like an oppressive mist, over Oxford, and, in a lesser degree, over Cambridge. I am well aware that this mist is

lifting, and that the English universities to-day are more conscious of the intellectual currents of the age than they were ten or twenty years ago. But to a man who has breathed the atmosphere of Leipsic and Berlin, a visit to the English seats of learning is yet an experience resembling somewhat that of the Counsellor in Hans Christian Andersen's "Goloshes of Fortune," when he was transferred back into the age of King Hans. One begins to understand, after such a visit, all the malignant wit-ticisms which Heine made on the English, and the generally unfriendly tone toward them which pervades German literature.

One needs to be, approximately at least, "Goethe-ripe" in order to be in sympathy with modern Germany and comprehend its aims; for Goethe is a colossal factor in the intellectual life of the Fatherland. One need not go as far as Hermann Grimm, who virtually says that a politically united Germany was made possible solely by Goethe and Schiller, and, it is to be inferred, would have been impossible without them. Goethe is the Atlas who carries the world of German thought, as we now witness it, upon his shoulders. He compelled his people to pass through the same stages of intellectual growth, through which he himself had passed, and though they may never reach as far as he, they cannot stray far from the paths of progress which he prescribed. It is surely not an accident, nor is it, as Matthew Arnold fancies, the need of having a literature commensurate with the greatness of the political empire,

which has impelled a host of critics, biographers, and commentators to study the various phases of Goethe's activity and throw the light of investigation upon every obscure spot in his career. Patriotism may account for many literary vagaries; it may disturb the focus and increase the magnifying capacity of many a critical lens; it may even create a spurious celebrity which may deceive people incapable of discrimination. But such celebrities, of which Germany has its share, never outlive the generation which made them. If a whole literature springs up about a man, which continues to grow and to enlist public interest half a century after his death, it may be taken for granted that that man has contributed something new and of abiding value to the world's fund of knowledge.

Many English critics have taken pains to register their more or less complete ignorance concerning Goethe, and only three or four have written anything worthy of serious consideration. Besides Lewes and Carlyle, of whose writings on German literature I have spoken in another place, these are Matthew Arnold, Richard Holt Hutton, and Professor John Stuart Blackie. I cannot consent to include the late Abraham Hayward in this number, although I am aware that he translated "Faust" into English prose and wrote a very readable and superficially attractive "Life of Goethe" in "Blackwood's Foreign Classics." Mr. Hayward was a professional man of the world, a clever and agreeable raconteur, an accomplished diner-out, who had gathered a store of

varied information fit for the entertainment of a dinner party; but he was neither a scholar nor a thinker, and there is nothing in his book to show that he had any deeper comprehension of his subject. Much of it is written in what appears to me a wrong key, and jars a little upon the ears that are attuned to Goethe's music.

Matthew Arnold's essay on "A French Critic of Goethe," though vastly subtler and nobler in tone, is also, to our individual feeling, here and there a trifle out of tune. Nevertheless this essay remains the most notable English estimate of Goethe. It is only a matter of regret that Mr. Arnold, instead of rectifying M. Scherer's judgments, and sometimes applauding them when they are manifestly unfair, did not choose Goethe himself for his theme rather than the French Chauvinist, who sees the great poet and all his works through the wrong end of the telescope. The judicial attitude which Mr. Arnold justly insists upon in a critic is surely not exhibited in sentences like these of M. Scherer:

"I say nothing of the substance of the piece ('Götz von Berlichingen'), of the absence of characters, of the nullity of the hero, of the commonplace of Weiszlingen, the inevitable traitor; of the melodramatic machinery of the secret tribunal. The style is no better. . . . The astonishment is not that Goethe at twenty-five should have been equal to writing this piece; the astonishment is that after so poor a start he should have subsequently gone so far."

But it would be a marvel indeed if M. Scherer, after the avowal of his hate of the Germans, so frankly expressed in the introductory remarks of his essay (which Mr. Arnold ought not to have omitted), had been able to form anything like a just estimate of their chief poet. Under the pseudo-judicial mask we catch a glimpse now and then of a calm malignity which tramples with ill-concealed delight upon the most precious treasures of the national enemy.

"I will show you what a poor and tawdry individual he is, this idol of yours, whom you reverence so deeply," he appears to say; and it is with this animus, and not with the well-informed, clear-sighted impartiality with which Mr. Arnold credits him, that he approached the task of presenting Goethe to his countrymen.

"He is not warped by injustice and ill-will toward Germany," says Mr. Arnold, "although the war has undoubtedly left him with a feeling of soreness. He is candid and cool, perhaps a little cold."

We venture to question whether this encomium is compatible with M. Scherer's own statement of his sentiments.

"The Germans have retaliated upon us the right of conquest; they have defeated us with envious hatred and cowardly insult. They have committed toward us offences which are not to be pardoned. *But if it is just to detest Germany*, it would be puerile on that account to try to ignore her. That has been done, we know. The charm which formerly attracted us to her is forever broken. We do not expect any

more from her elevating ideas or ennobling sentiments."

We do not say that the feelings here expressed are not pardonable, and perhaps even natural; but surely a criticism animated by such feelings must be anything but "clear-sighted," "cool," and "impartial." Even coldness is too weak a term for its characterization, for detestation implies a considerable degree of heat. It is passionate resentment of a supposed national wrong, openly professed and rarely disguised, that we find in M. Scherer's writings on Goethe.

But one more quotation to justify this judgment and we shall have done with M. Scherer:

"He [Goethe] has left no distinct and living figure. His characters lack relief because they lack spontaneity. His 'Werther' is silly, his 'Faust' is fantastic, his 'Tasso' is only redeemed by his madness, the novel 'Wilhelm Meister' is, according to the expression of Niebuhr, 'a menagerie of tame animals,' and as for the Memoirs of Goethe, they are a heap of lifeless ashes cooled off, over which one only sees some fantastic resemblances capriciously trace themselves."

If a man otherwise sane and in many respects highly gifted can stultify himself to the extent here indicated, he surely does not deserve to be treated with the suave deference which Mr. Arnold accords to this malignant and disgruntled Frenchman.*

* M. Edmond Scherer was of Swiss descent, and though born in Paris (1815) occupied for some years the chair of Biblical Exegesis at the Geneva Academy.

As a mere contrast, let us see how Goethe, under circumstances vastly more trying, regarded the French ; for Napoleon I. had surely not the justification for invading German territory that the late Emperor William had for invading France. The French Emperor was engaged in a war of aggression and conquest, while the Germans in 1870 merely accepted a challenge and avenged an ancient wrong. In a conversation with his friend Soret concerning his attitude during the War of Liberation, Goethe made these significant remarks, which reveal a largeness and serenity of soul incomprehensible apparently to a man of M. Scherer's calibre :

"How could I write songs of hate without hating? And, between ourselves, I did not hate the French, although I thanked God when we were rid of them. How could I, to whom culture and barbarism are alone of importance, hate a nation which is among the most cultivated of the earth, and to which I owe so large a share of my own culture? Altogether national hate is a peculiar thing. You will always find it strongest and most violent at the lowest stage of culture. But there is a stage where it vanishes altogether, and where one stands, to a certain extent, above the nations, and feels the weal and woe of a neighboring people, as if it had happened to be one's own. This degree of culture was conformable to my nature, and I had become strengthened in it long before I reached my sixtieth year."

Mr. Arnold admits that Goethe is greater than M. Scherer's presentation of him would lead us to sup-

pose. "Tone and perspective are somehow a little wrong," is his guarded and hyper-judicial phrase. His dislike of rhetoric and enthusiastic exaggeration brings him perilously near to the opposite extreme, that of colorless understatement and undervaluation. It is possibly a consciousness of this which induces him to sum up his estimate of Goethe in a trenchant and authoritative judgment which is so glaringly at variance with that of M. Scherer that it instantly invalidates all the praise which he has bestowed upon the latter :

"Goethe is the greatest poet of modern times, not because he is one of the half-dozen human beings who in the history of our race have shown the most signal gift for poetry, but because having a very considerable gift for poetry he was at the same time, in the width, depth, and richness of his criticism of life, by far our greatest modern man. . . . Nay, his preciousness and importance as a clear and profound modern spirit, as a master-critic of modern life, must communicate a worth of their own to his poetry, and may well make it seem to have a positive value and perfectness as poetry more than it has."

One perceives a long vista of thought behind these incisive and memorable words. They are the visible summit resting upon a broad base of study and speculation. When taken in connection with Mr. Arnold's other notable utterance concerning Goethe, that he is "the clearest, the largest, the most helpful thinker of modern times," they leave nothing to be desired. Standing alone and without the

qualifications to be inferred from the indorsement of M. Scherer, they would constitute a final and satisfactory judgment. But that insidious way of damning a great man with faint praise, adopted by the censorious Frenchman, ought not to have imposed upon so astute a critic as Mr. Arnold, especially when at the very outset the judicial attitude is disclaimed and a bitter rancor is openly avowed.

A certain degree of sympathy, without which critical insight is impossible, is needed for the interpretation of poetry; or, as Goethe put it, "a work of art can be comprehended by the head only with the assistance of the heart." This assistance of the heart M. Scherer entirely dispenses with. No effort is made by him to reproduce in himself the spirit in which "Werther" and "Faust" are written, nor even to put them in connection with the national and social conditions from which they sprang. Instead of that he stands aloof and utters hasty and sweeping condemnations which as expressions of national hate are pardonable, but as criticism worthless.

Mr. Richard Holt Hutton's essay on "Goethe and his Influence"* is such a beautiful piece of work, and so manifestly intended to be just and fair, that it seems almost ungracious to question any of its statements. Mr. Hutton contemplates Goethe from a point of view quite different from that of Mr. Arnold. While the latter admires his

* *Essays, Theological and Literary*, vol. ii., London, 1880.

Olympian serenity—his calm and unbiassed attitude toward all phenomena—the former regards this as a limitation. To the apostle of sweetness and light, Goethe's secularism, not to say his paganism, was highly congenial and in accord with his own philosophy, while to the author of "Essays, Theological and Literary" it is an obnoxious thing, to which he finds it difficult to do justice.

"The entire superseding of personal trust by self-reliance, the absence of all trace of humility, the calm, superior glance which he cast into the mystery around, but never into the holiness above, him, gave often a heathen coloring to his works. . . . This power of assuming at will a cruel moral indifference to that which he did not choose to have agitating him, is the feeling he has so finely embodied in the picture of the gods contained in the song of the Fates in 'Iphigenia.'"

The judgment here pronounced contains an indubitable truth which no one can ignore in making up his final estimate of Goethe. To Mr. Hutton it constitutes his chief gravamen against a character which in many respects attracts him. As a Christian and a theologian he is compelled to condemn the calmly scientific spirit which with perfect awesomeness pried into all the mysteries of nature, and although respecting all forms of religious belief, viewed them with a mere philosophic interest and espoused none. Mr. Hutton remarks, in a still higher degree, this unabashed curiosity in the presence of the unknowable in Shelley and character-

izes it with a masterly artistic distinctness.* But there is an essential difference between Goethe's attitude toward religion and that of Shelley. A kind of passionate non-conformism—a need to protest against everything which he disbelieved in—was, from his earliest youth, characteristic of the English poet ; while the German, regarding all existing institutions (religion not excepted) as manifestations of law and conditions of orderly progress, held them to be worthy of the respect and support of every good citizen. Shelley reminds one of the English traveller in catholic countries who persists in standing bolt upright with his conspicuous hat on, when the holy Host is carried through the streets and all bare their heads and many kneel. Goethe, though he would intellectually have shared Shelley's view of the ceremony, would instinctively have conformed to the common custom. He cherished no animosity toward any form of belief, and did not, like Shelley, wage war against Christianity. All religions represented to him the human aspiration for truth. They were all more or less imperfect embodiments of man's conceptions of the Infinite, and subject to growth in accordance with humanity's intellectual and spiritual progress. Even superstition, under which term Shelley embraced all that men reverence as sacred, was to Goethe but obscurity of vision, not a malign power which had for its own dark

* Mr. Hutton's essay, *Shelley's Poetical Mysticism*, is, to our mind, one of the noblest pieces of literature of its kind in the English language.

purposes stricken humanity with blindness. Voltaire's notorious *écrasez l'infâme* was in perfect conformity with the spirit of Shelley, but would have been condemned by Goethe as indicative of a shallow and utterly unphilosophical brain.

There is no implication in this comparison that Mr. Hutton would be capable of confounding Goethe's attitude with that of Shelley; but I have a strong suspicion that the latter's fearless and outspoken hostility appears to him less obnoxious than the former's philosophic benevolence. Speaking of Goethe's writings in general he says with perfect candor:

"They invariably repel at first English readers with English views of life and duty. As the characteristic atmosphere of the man distills into your life, you find the magnetic force coming strongly over you; you are as a man mesmerized; you feel the calm independence of so much on which you helplessly lean, combined with his thorough insight into that desire of yours to lean, drawing you irresistibly toward the invisible intellectual centre at which such independent strength and such genial breadth of thought was possible."

That is an admirable statement of the fascination which Goethe exercises over his disciples. But Mr. Hutton, as his essay shows, feels the repulsion no less strongly than the mesmeric attraction, and he guards his critical independence manfully. I fancy, though I may be wrong, that he came to Goethe too late in life to fall under the sway of his fasci-

nation. And the theological temper would seem to constitute an obscuring mist through which the poet may, indeed, loom up colossal, but with rather a sinister aspect. That a religious man should judge Goethe from a religious point of view is natural enough; and it is most useful to have his life and work scrutinized from this point of view, and its possible defects and inconsistencies revealed. This would constitute what Mr. Arnold calls the judgment of incompatibility, which in the hands of a man like Mr. Hutton cannot fail to yield profitable results. And it is with no desire to minimize the excellence and helpfulness of his beautifully discriminating essay that I shall venture to point out some instances of what appears to me, the disciple, faulty interpretation. The "judgment of gratitude and sympathy" and that of conscientious incompatibility are bound to clash in many points, and they may thereby mutually rectify each other and enable the reader to arrive at a right conclusion.

Unless Mr. Hutton was a bachelor when he wrote the present essay, it is difficult to account for the following passage:

"He [Goethe] was a reflective, old fashioned, calmly imaginative child, always fascinated by a mystery, but never, properly speaking, *awed* by it. It kindled his imagination; it never subdued him. He was full of wonder and quite without veneration. In the 'altar of the Lord' which the child secretly built on a music-stand of his father's at seven, and on which he burnt incense in the shape of a pastil

until he found that he was in danger of injuring his altar, he was innocently playing with a *subject which to almost any other child would have been too sacred for imaginative amusement.*"

If my recollection of my childhood and my constant association with children have taught me anything, it is that they very rarely possess this veneration for the sanctity of worship, at the age of seven, and never unless it has been carefully implanted in them by teaching and example. The references of children to God and their continual questionings concerning Him are, as we all know, apt to be comically disrespectful, often shockingly so. I remember in my childhood "playing church" with my brothers and sisters, preaching from a chair, baptizing kittens, saying mass* before an improvised altar, etc., without the remotest suspicion of its being sacrilegious; and I have seen my own children and those of my friends indulging in similar games. The imitative instinct is, in nine children out of ten, far stronger than their sense of reverence, and is constantly exercised without thought of harm upon that which to their elders is most sacred.

But a graver delinquency is, to my mind, Mr. Hutton's disparagement of the Second Part of "Faust." He has evidently never taken adequate pains to find out what this gigantic structure of philosophic thought means, or whether it means anything. Evidently he inclines to the latter opinion, for otherwise he could not have compared Goethe's "childlike de-

* Lutheran clergymen in Norway still use the mass.

light in puzzling his readers," in his boyish fairy-tale, "The New Paris," "with his mystification of Eckermann, when he asked for the meaning of the passage concerning 'the Mothera.'"

To suppose that Goethe, from a mere idle desire to mystify, disfigured his chief work with a meaningless or pseudo-profound allusion, shows a disrespect for his artistic sincerity which is surprising in a man of Mr. Hutton's earnestness and freedom from prejudice. I know that he is here in general agreement with English opinion, but English opinion concerning the Second Part of "Faust," in so far as it exists, is based upon ignorance. Obviously Mr. Hutton has no more than Matthew Arnold made any determined effort to comprehend the enormous scope and complexity of that much-abused, but, on that account no less valuable, work. The mere fact that Goethe wrote it would seem to entitle it to serious consideration. It is not easily understood. It does not yield up its meaning to a mere cursory reader. It is not, as poetry, equal to the First Part; but without it the First Part is nothing but a series of dramatic episodes, and the whole philosophic meaning, which is, after all, what gives "Faust" its high place in literature, would be lost. So far from being a mistake of Goethe's old age—"a fantastic piece of senile folly," as I heard an eminent Englishman call it—it contains the quintessence of its author's philosophy of life, the summary of his worldly wisdom. Though of a somewhat conglomerate character, and suffering from occasional obscurity, it is organically coherent

with the First Part and is as essential a part of the grand design. That Goethe regarded it as such is obvious from his remark to Eckermann (August, 1831), when he had finished the last scene of his completed "Faust": "My life henceforth," he said, "I may view as a pure gift; and it is now really of small account whether I do anything and what I do."

Let Mr. Hutton read the interesting discussion concerning "Faust" in Goethe's correspondence with Schiller, and above all let him note the noble earnestness and lofty conception of their poetic calling which characterize both writers, and I fancy that he would feel inclined to revise his judgment concerning the significance of "the Mothers." There is, indeed, nothing so very mysterious in this allusion; but to explain it would involve a longer excursion into the philosophy of "Faust" than my space here permits. I may, perhaps, be permitted to refer anyone who desires further information to my "Commentary on Faust,"* where the subject is treated at some length.

With the exception of his rather sweeping condemnation of "Wilhelm Meister," which also betrays spiritual alienism and lack of sympathy, I have no further quarrel with Mr. Hutton, but much appreciation of his critical acumen and his beautiful felicity of language. Before taking leave of him I shall

* An explanation of the Second Part of Faust will be found in my book, Goethe and Schiller, Their Lives and Works. New York, 1879.

take the liberty to quote a few of his most vigorous characterizations :

"Goethe never became a selfish man in the coarse sense of the term. He always cultivated benignant, unselfish sympathies as the most graceful elements in this same fancy-pyramid of his existence. He was generous by nature, and would give up from kindly feeling anything that was not of the essence of himself."

"He wished for love with limited liability ; he did not wish to devote *himself* to any one but himself. This limited liability did not so well meet the views of the young ladies themselves, who were sometimes, to his infinite embarrassment, willing even to go to America with him, or anything else."

"It ('Götz') is the only great production of Goethe in which a really noble, self-forgetful *man* stands out in the foreground to give us a moral standard by which to measure the meaner characters."

"His (Goethe's) other poetry, often exquisitely fine, has the polish of high art upon it ; but his lyrics seem to escape as unconsciously from the essence of the earth as the scent from a violet, or the music from a bird."

"I grant his was a light and spacious mind. I grant that he was the wisest man of modern days who lacked the wisdom of a child ; the deepest, who never knew what it was to kneel in the dust with bowed head and broken heart."

I quote this last dictum, not because I agree with it, but in order to emphasize Mr. Hutton's attitude.

The "wisdom of a child" seems to me a glaring misnomer. For simplicity, *naïveté*, trustful acceptance of statements on authority or faith, however admirable, do not argue wisdom ; and they are qualities which are necessarily lost, as the child advances to intellectual maturity. If Mr. Hutton had said "the faith of a child," I should have subscribed to his statement. But the faith of a grown-up man who has thought much and questioned the Sphinx of Existence with indomitable perseverance and patience cannot partake of the quality of the child's faith, which is mere blind acceptance without reason, doubt, or research.

My third representative of British opinion concerning Goethe is Professor John Stuart Blackie, of Edinburgh, whose preface and introduction to his book, "The Wisdom of Goethe," contain as adequate and sympathetic a judgment of the poet as is anywhere to be found. I know, outside of Germany, no critic who seems to have felt the spirit of Goethe so acutely, and breathed his atmosphere with such a sense of kinship and well being. No evidence can I discover that Professor Blackie had any British prejudice to overcome, before he surrendered to the attraction of Goethe's personality. There is no obscuring fog in his mind ; but a passionless impartiality and sincerity which constitute the best possible medium for critical observation. A little touch of partisanship may be manifest here and there, in his determination to combat the common view, which is, to his mind, unjust and ignorant.

"Two such opposite types of national character [as the English and the German] as soon as they come near enough to provoke a mutual estimate, naturally produce a clash ; and in this way the English, who in their days of intellectual isolation—days yet fresh in the memory of living men—*gloried in simply despising the Germans*, now that the current of events has brought with it a general necessity of international recognition, *too often make this recognition through a thick atmosphere of misconception and a strong tincture of prejudice.*" *

As my own conception of Goethe's character coincides in all essentials with that of Professor Blackie, I quote him merely for the purpose of reinforcing with his authority opinions which in this country need to be emphasized by repetition :

"He [Goethe] was at the same time possessed of such singularly original force and rich completeness of character as to have led his people over from a state of feebleness and dependence on foreign influences into a state of firmly rooted native growth, luxuriant blossom, and beneficent fruitage."

"He could never either think or feel or act independently of his environment, and his course of activity, though radically proceeding, no doubt, from what he was, depended in each individual case upon where he was. His was a nature to learn from everybody, and to be touched by everything ; he had a *grand zest of living, and put forth loving arms in all directions freely, in order to live largely.*"

* The italics are my own.—H. H. B.

"He lived and died, not without hard work, indeed, and hard struggles, much less untouched by the envy which always waits upon merit, especially in the first steps of its ascent, but in the end emphatically a rich man ; rich in friends, rich in love, rich in insight, and rich in good works."

"Hutton, in his admirable essay above quoted, talks as if Goethe had small capacity for friendship. But this is true only of a particular kind, of clinging and engrossing friendship, which to some minds is a necessity. That Goethe did not require a friend, as some do, to look up to, was the necessary consequence of the Olympian character of his intellect. Jupiter on his throne may have favorites, but no fellows."

The judgment here quoted, though in one sense just, is, perhaps, misleading. To make it true it stands in need of amplification. Goethe had, particularly in his youth, a great capacity for friendship, not merely of the Olympian order but of the clinging, sentimental kind. Such was, for instance, his relation to Fritz Jacobi, and in a lesser degree to Lavater. But he outgrew both these men intellectually, and he could not in later years persuade himself to feign fidelity to the ghost of a friendship which had long been dead. A friendship, in order to be real, must be based upon a community of tastes, sentiments, or interests ; and whenever such a community of sentiments has ceased to exist, the friendship is by that very fact dead. Goethe's high sincerity and his fidelity to his best self compelled

him in many instances to sacrifice relations which, though once helpful and mutually stimulating, had become a burden and a hindrance to his growth. This is hardly selfishness, but a duty which every sincere man owes to himself. You can do your friend no good by feigning for him a feeling which no longer possesses you ; and all talk about "fidelity" under such circumstances is but a remnant of the old feudal ideal, which took less note of personal compatibility than of a purely external allegiance which you owed to your friend, as you did to your sovereign.

Professor Blackie's reference to the long series of Goethe's loves is characterized by the same large-hearted comprehension and liberal spirit :

"To Goethe the sight of any beautiful object was like delicate music to the ear of the cunning musician ; he was carried away by it, and floated in its element joyously, as a swallow in the summer air, or a sea-mew on the buoyant wave. Hence the rich story of Goethe's loves, with which scandal, of course, and prudery have made their market ; but which, when looked into carefully, were just as much part of his genius as 'Faust' and 'Iphigenia,' a part without which, indeed, neither 'Faust' nor 'Iphigenia' could ever have been written. . . . Let no man therefore take offence when I say roundly that Goethe was always falling in love, and that I consider this a great virtue in his character. Had he not done so, he would not have been half the man, nor the tenth part of the poet that he was."

But two more passages I have marked for quotation, both of which are essential to the characterization of Goethe. The first expresses a thought which Mr. Hutton has rendered with no less felicity:

"When he [Goethe] writes, he is not doing a thing to make you stare, or to make himself feel as if he were out of the body for a season; he is merely living out his life—he is merely achieving the *bildung* or the culture which nature meant for his life-task, when she drew out his members marvellously in the womb."

In speaking of the common English view of Goethe, in his relation to women, Professor Blackie cites with approval an extract from "The Journal of Caroline Fox:—"

"With regard to Goethe's character, the more Stirling * examines the less he believes in his having wilfully trifled with the feelings of women. With regard to his selfishness, he holds that he did but give the fullest, freest scope for the exercise of his gift, and as we are all gainers thereby, we cannot call it selfishness."

Well, selfishness is a relative term, and depends largely upon your point of view. It must be borne in mind that Goethe was a child of the eighteenth century, which was the age of individualism *par excellence*. The subordination of the citizen to the state, and his duty to the commonwealth, were doctrines which would have sounded strange to the

* Carlyle's well-known friend, John Stirling.

generation that preceded the French Revolution. Each man and woman who was conscious of an individuality was then (like Goethe) occupied in rearing "the pyramid of his existence" as high as possible; and it made very little difference to him whether, in so doing, he overshadowed the neighboring pyramids or encroached upon their territory. Goethe was thoroughly imbued with the desire to grow to the largest possible stature of manhood, which desire is utterly incompatible with the altruistic ideal. Therefore let us concede that he was selfish to the extent necessitated by his ideal of life. Ruthlessly egoistic he was certainly not, first, because of the innate kindliness of his nature, and secondly, because he would have regarded any unnecessary self-assertion as undignified and a blemish upon the character, which, in accordance with his own conception, he wished to make perfect. The degree of altruism compatible with self-preservation has never been definitely settled, nor can it ever be settled. It must vary with the age and with the individual. And the degree of self-sacrifice compatible with a high self-development, ascendancy, and intellectual dominance, is a question of still greater complexity. Whether Goethe's conduct is to be termed egoistic or altruistic, depends primarily upon the tribunal before which he is to be arraigned. If that tribunal be governed by the code of the century into which he was born, the verdict will be favorable; if it be governed by that of the nineteenth century, the judgment may incline toward severity. But the

judgment of posterity will be that he practised the exact degree of altruism or of egoism that was consistent with his own ideal of life. Measured by the standard of Pascal or St. Francis of Assisi, he was an egoist ; but by that of Napoleon, he was an altruist.

IV.

SOME ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GOETHE

EMERSON revealed in a striking manner the limitations of his mind, when he declared that he would just as soon swim across the Charles River, instead of taking the bridge, as read a foreign book in the original when he could procure a good translation. Goodness, to be sure, is an elastic term, and may be stretched to include anything. As far as one may judge from the general tenor of Emerson's writings, he would call a translation good which rendered the meaning of the original with a fair degree of clearness and accuracy. To charms of style and harmony of sound he was never very sensitive. He commended Carlyle's translation of "Wilhelm Meister," which transforms the fluent, limpid, and well-balanced periods of Goethe into a crabbed and thorny English, bristling with the individuality, not of the author, but of the translator. It is rarely that a man is born less fitted for the work of translating than Carlyle; and if Emerson had not been his friend, he would probably have discovered that the English "Wilhelm Meister" has little in common

with the German original except the story. But an artist of Goethe's rank is never content with the mere telling of a story. Take, for instance, "The Sorrows of Werther," which as a story amounts to nothing, but which nevertheless exercises a potent charm, and is regarded as one of the most exquisite products of German literature. The British barbarian who undertook to put this delicate piece of imaginative writing into English for the Bohn Library committed an offence compared with which that of Carlyle was venial. For Carlyle produced a coherent and interesting book with a definite style, although it was not that of Goethe; while the mutilator of "Werther" simply bungled along with a heavy hand, unconscious of the beauties which he killed at every stroke of his sacrilegious pen. He produced a book in which scarcely a trace of the charm of the original is discoverable; and English readers who know the fame of Goethe have been forced to the conclusion that he has been greatly overestimated, and that German literature must be poor and barren, since a work of such trifling merit can have acquired so great a reputation.

I am inclined to put down as a general maxim that the more replete a book is with the charms of style and imaginative coloring, the harder it is to translate. A fact may be as well expressed in one civilized language as in another. A thought that is sufficiently definite to be capable of expression in English can usually be transposed without difficulty into German, French, and Italian. But a thought

may be expressed feebly or strongly, bunglingly or felicitously, and it sometimes seems as if it were capable of a far more striking and felicitous utterance in one language than in another. Words have color and flavor, and produce an independent effect, quite apart from the thoughts which they embody. Words absolutely synonymous have different values, different *timbre*, different harmonic effects. One word has poetic dignity and elevation, while another, which means the same, is prosaic and commonplace. A poet who failed to perceive this would be a lamentable failure, and the more keenly he perceives it, the more untranslatable he is sure to be.

It is an old saying that "it takes a poet to translate a poet." It does not follow that it takes a great poet to translate a great poet, and a small one to translate a small one. On the contrary, a small poet, if gifted with this peculiar perception of the individuality and harmonic value of words, would be likely to make a better translator than one of greater and more commanding personality. The former would be more likely to respect his original, while the latter could scarcely avoid obtruding himself and giving us more or less than the text warranted.

Coleridge played at ducks and drakes with the text of Schiller's "Wallenstein," and makes one suspect that his German scholarship was defective; but he managed to produce an English drama full of poetic beauty, though with a stronger impress of the translator's than of the author's style. There is not the flavor of Schiller, so distinct to those who

have breathed it, in Coleridge's "Wallenstein;" but there is a delightful flavor of Coleridge. Walter Scott, on the other hand, has given a comparatively faithful rendering of Goethe's "Götz," and with a youthful and tentative hand groped for the English equivalents of the bold German phrases. It is distinctly the work of a young man* who does not yet trust his own powers. There is scarcely any of the happy dash and raciness that distinguish the original, in Scott's version; and if Scott had undertaken this work after a riper literary experience he would probably have recreated "Götz" in English—given us the English equivalent for "Götz"—as Coleridge has given us an English equivalent for "Wallenstein."

An interesting inquiry is suggested by this *début*† of Walter Scott with a translation of a mediæval play by Goethe. Is it not possible that the reading of "Götz" may have aroused an enthusiasm for the Middle Ages, and opened his eyes to the literary treasures that there lay unused? If such was the case—and to me it seems highly probable—we are indirectly indebted to Goethe for the Waverley Novels, and the romantic movement in English literature.

One of the best specimens of Goethe in English

* Sir Walter was twenty-eight years old in 1799, when he published the translation of "Götz."

† I say *début*, though being aware that Sir Walter published anonymously, in 1796, "The Chase," and "William and Ellen," from the German of Bürger.

is Miss Ellen Frothingham's "Hermann and Dorothea," which preserves the stately German hexameters, and does not scruple to improve slipshod lines which are rather more frequent than they ought to be. It may seem little short of sacrilege to improve upon Goethe, but it must be admitted that "Hermann and Dorothea," which was written with great rapidity, is full of prosodic eccentricities. In the first place, the conjunction *und*, frequently commencing the line, is made to carry the syllabic accent of the spondee or dactyl, and in a few instances it does service for the last unaccented syllable, as, for instance, iv., 194 :

"Ach! da kommt mir so einsam vor, wie der Kammer, der Hof und"

which Miss Frothingham renders :

"Ah, so lonely they seem to me then, the chamber and court-yard."

But one of the worst lines, prosodically, to be found in the book, is the second of the following, v., 32, 33 :

"Er ernähret uns alle. Und Heil dem Bürger des kleinen Städtchens, welcher ländlich Gewerb mit Bürgererwerb paart."

The art of verse, technically considered, consists in the happy adaptation of sound to sense, in such-wise that the natural accent, determined by the sense, coincides with the artificial accent of the me-

tre. The words or syllables weightiest in sound and in meaning should therefore have the ictus, or metrical stress, while expletives and words carrying a lighter burden of thought, should be made to fall, as far as possible, upon the unaccented syllables of the verse. No one knew this better than Goethe, or practised it, as a rule, with happier effect.

Rarely has our poet been subjected to worse maltreatment than by the translators of his ballads and lyrics. The late Professor Frederick H. Hedge, who, whatever else he was, was no poet, set a bad example when he murdered "*Der Erlkönig*" in verses of which the following may serve as an example :

" ' My son, why hidest thy face so shy ?
' Seest thou not, father, the Erl-king nigh ?
The Erlen king, with train and crown ?'
' It is a wreath of mist, my son.'

" Come, lovely boy, come, go with me,
Such merry plays I'll play with thee ;
Many a bright flower grows on the strand,
And my mother has many a gay garment at hand."

I cannot detect a suspicion of the beautiful ballad strain of the original in this dry and spiritless rendering, nor can I in any of Professor Hedge's translations of Goethe's verse find any indication that he appreciated the magnitude of his task. A certain bland self-assurance which does not dream of the subtler difficulties to be overcome is what strikes me as a characteristic of this excellent man's

dealings with Goethe. It gives one positively a cold shudder to read such awful perversion as this of "The King in Thule :"

" There was a King in Thule,
Till death a *constant soul* * (!) ;
His queen she *loved him truly*,
And left him a golden bowl!

" And now, while his last breath breathing,
He reckons his towns *all up*,
All to his heir bequeathing,
But not that golden cup.

" There stood *the old toper*—slowly
Draining life's last, he stood—
And the cup he held so holy
He hurled into the flood."

There are many more specimens of earnest goodwill, coupled with glaring inability, in that curious volume entitled "Select Minor Poems of Goethe and Schiller : with Notes by John S. Dwight," published by Hilliard, Gray & Co., Boston, 1839. James Freeman Clarke, William H. Channing, George Bancroft, S. M. Fuller, N. L. Frothingham, Charles T. Brooks, and G. W. Haven are the other contributors. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Frothingham are the only ones of this number who succeed, in a measure, in keeping their translations (though with occasional lapses) in the same key as their originals.

* The italics are mine.—H. H. B.

The former's "rendering of the 'Orphic Sayings'" and the latter's of the "Song of the Fates," in "Iphigenia," are in every way creditable. They have a solemn organ tone and a sententious elevation of language which no German poet (and in England only Milton) possessed in the same degree as Goethe.

Mr. Clarke included nearly all his contributions to this collection in a later volume called "Exotics," which bears his own initials and those of his daughter on the title page. A great deal of excellent translation from many authors is contained in this little book, and it would be ungracious, perhaps, to find fault where there is so much to praise. There are, indeed, difficulties in the art of translation which seem to lie in the different tone and color of the language itself, and which can be overcome by nothing short of inspiration. I am very sure I could not render into English that would appear to myself adequate the splendidly sonorous lines in Goethe's epilogue to Schiller's "Song of the Bell:"

"Und hinter ihm in wesenlosem Scheine
Lag was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine."

And it is therefore in no carping spirit that I call attention to Mr. Clarke's shortcomings:

"And far behind, in mists dissolving fast,
That which confines us all, the common, passed."

The female rhyme is here so obviously needed to

preserve the key, that a male rhyme, with its abrupt stop, positively shocks the ear.

Altogether the most satisfactory collection of Goethe's lyrics which has appeared in English, though it leaves much to be desired, is "The Poems and Ballads of Goethe," translated by W. Edmonstoune Aytoun and Sir Theodore Martin. This volume has the distinction of containing nothing which is really poor. The "Song of Mignon," upon which so many infelicitous poetasters have tried their hands, is particularly well done, and even the exquisite "Heidenröslein," which is as light as thistledown and as airily *dégagé* in its movement, is far from being a failure. The last verse is, however, not so good as the rest, and its third line—

"It turned and stung him, but in vain"—

is too choppy, and metrically defective. A similar criticism applies to the rendering of that noble verse—

" Ueber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh ;
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch ;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch."

This is a mere articulate sigh breathed into the

evening air, and so elusive as to defy recapture in alien sounds :

“ Peace breathes along the shade
Of every hill,
The tree-tops of the glade
Are hushed and still ;
All woodland murmurs cease,
The birds to rest within the brake are gone ;
Be patient, weary heart, anon
Thou too shalt be at peace.”

The English verse is here scarcely less poetic than the German. It is in the right mood, but it is not so beautifully spontaneous and free in its movement.

A very interesting attempt to “English” Goethe’s “Westöstlicher Divan” was made fifteen years ago by the Reverend John Weiss, of Boston. As we all know, the lyrical ease, the wild grace, and the bubbling affluence of phrase which characterize Goethe’s early songs deserted him, in a measure, in these Oriental poems, or at least in the greater portion of them. There is a certain stately, elderly didacticism, obviously intended, in the “Book of Hafis,” the “Book of Parables,” and the “Book of Reflections.” But in the “Book of Suleika,” parts of which were written by Marianne Willemer, there is again the happy audacity of youth, and a glorious fulness of feeling and utterance which recalls the poems to Lilli and the lyrics in “Faust” and “Wilhelm Meister.” When we consider these “flashes of song,” of which I have cited some of

the loveliest examples, Wordsworth's criticism of Goethe's poetry, that "it does not seem inevitable enough," is so wide of the mark as either to appear ignorant or malevolent. Wordsworth himself never wrote anything having this quality of "inevitableness" in the same degree as the "Heidenröslein," "Ueber allen Gipfeln," or the "Archangels' Chorus." in "Faust."

Mr. John Weiss has admirably preserved the tone of the didactic poems in the "Westöstlicher Divan," but somehow his deftness of touch deserted him when he attempted the Suleika songs. Where Goethe flows with richest abundance and ease, his translator is most choppy, tortuous, and unsatisfactory. Professor John Stuart Blackie, who in his "Wisdom of Goethe" made liberal extracts from the "Divan," cleared this rock by not venturing on anything in a purely lyrical vein. It is Goethe the sage he primarily concerns himself with, not Goethe the poet. His book is a treasure-house of noble, sententious sayings, all rendered with painstaking accuracy—the garnered wisdom of a rich and noble life. If it were possible to bestow the results of one man's experience upon another, it would be one of the most useful books ever compiled. But wisdom, I am inclined to believe, is never directly communicable. It strikes root only in a kindred soul prepared for, if not by, a kindred experience.

Of the many translations of "Faust" I regard Bayard Taylor's as the best. Its shortcomings have been ably stated both by friendly and un-

friendly critics ; but these are, to my mind, compensated for by a poetic afflatus which distinguishes the book and proves it to be the work of a poet. The Reverend Charles T. Brooks, who published a very acceptable version, which by some is held to be superior to Taylor's, was far less successful in reproducing the musical keys of the original, and he is far poorer in winged words, which seize the spirit of the German as by inspiration. I cannot, for instance, imagine a happier rendering of the line in the dedication,

"Das strenge Herz es fühlt sich mild und weich,"

than Taylor's

"And the stern heart is tenderly unmanned ;"

which certainly accords better with the elegiac key of the poem than Brooks'

"The rigid heart to milder mood gives way ;"

or Miss Swanwick's

"A tender mood my steadfast heart oversways."

The same observation holds good in regard to the Easter choruses, though the admirers of Taylor are here perhaps obliged to concede a liberal use of his predecessors, and particularly of Brooks. Taylor followed in this respect the example of his master, who declared (apropos of Mephisto's song, "Was machst du mir vor Liebchen's Thür," which he had

adapted from Shakspeare) that he felt at liberty to use all that came in his way, provided he could improve upon it. And who will question that, considered as poetry, Taylor's version is here superior to that of Brooks? Take, for instance, the "Chorus of the Disciples," which is the most difficult, and so may serve as a test of the comparative merits of the translators. How ecstatic is the swift dactylic movement of Taylor's rendering!

" Has He, victoriously,
Burst from the vaulted
Grave, and all-gloriously
Now sits exalted ?
Is He in glow of birth
Rapture creative near ?
Ah ! to the woe of earth
Still are we native here !
We, His aspiring
Followers, Him we miss ;
Weeping, desiring,
Master, Thy Bliss ! "

Excepting the last four lines, which fall a trifle below the key, I regard this as one of the greatest feats of translation in the English language. The alternately rhyming lines,

" Ist er in Werdelust
Schaffender Freude nah ?
Ach ! an der Erde Brust
Sind wir zum Leide da, "

are rendered with a poetic felicity and vigor which throw Brooks far into the shade. Particularly the

rendering of the almost untranslatable word *Werdelust* by "glow of birth," and the producing of a dactylic rhyme, accurate both as to sense and sound, in "woe of earth," can scarcely fail to challenge the admiration of all who know the difficulties which are here so triumphantly overcome. Here is the version of Brooks, and I beg the unprejudiced reader, with an ear for rhythmical effects, to pronounce if it approaches so near to the sublimity of the original :

" Risen victorious ?
Sits He, God's Holy One,
High throned and glorious ?
He, in this blest new birth
Rapture creative knows ;
Ah ! on the breast of earth
Taste we still nature's woes.
Left here to languish,
Lone in a world like this,
Fills us with anguish,
Master, Thy bliss."

Miss Swanwick's version of this is almost on the level of prose, and makes scarcely the faintest attempt to sound the trumpet-note of triumph which rings in the first four lines, and which Taylor has reproduced so finely :

" He whom we mourned as dead,
Living and glorious,
From the dark grave hath fled,
O'er death victorious.
Almost creative bliss

Waits on His growing powers.
Ah ! Him on earth we miss ;
Sorrow and grief are ours.
Yearning He left His own
'Mid sore annoy.
Ah ! we must needs bemoan,
Master, Thy joy ! ”

I believe I am acquainted with all translations of “Faust” into English, and I have, after much study, come to the conclusion that Taylor’s unites more excellences than any of the others. If I were to state its claim to superiority in one word, I should say that, generally speaking, it is poetry, while all the others are metrical prose, rising now and then into the regions consecrated to the tuneful Nine. It is not by any means a final and fully satisfactory translation, making all others superfluous ; but it gives everywhere evidence of having been written by a man of finer poetic susceptibility and a higher poetic gift than any of his competitors.

Where a dozen translators have grappled earnestly with a poet’s text, coincidences of expression are inevitable. The worst solecisms are frequently due to the effort to escape resemblance to a predecessor. There is but one of Taylor’s predecessors who is on nearly as high a level of excellence, and who in single instances perhaps surpasses him ; and this is not Mr. Brooks, but Sir Theodore Martin. Here is the Spinning Song, for instance, the first verse of which is almost identical in both versions.

Sir Theodore Martin renders it :

“ My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
’Tis gone forever
And evermore.”

Taylor’s translation runs as follows :

“ My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I never shall find it,
Ah ! nevermore.

With the exception of the seventh verse which is identical in both, there are no further resemblances except such as are unavoidable. The Easter Choruses of Sir Theodore Martin are distinctly inferior to Taylor’s. In fact Taylor is always best where he has the greatest difficulties to contend with, and where no competitor can be of use to him. It may be admitted, without detracting from the value of his work, as a whole, that in some instances he falls short of the sublimity of his text, as in the prayer :

“ Oh neige,
Du Schmerzensreiche ; ”

to which he has hardly done justice in the lines :

“ Incline, oh maiden,
Thou sorrow-laden,” etc. ;

which in passionate intensity does not approach the German.

I cannot agree with Mr. Matthew Arnold, who pronounces Hayward's translation of "Faust" the best because it is "the most straightforward." To the lover of "Faust" who seeks something more than the bald meaning, Hayward's version is exasperating. His laborious and cumbersome prose is not only prosaic but prosy. It is, linguistically, on a dead level of commonplace. Who, not knowing the original, but having read Hayward's translation, would ever dream that this was one of the great masterpieces of the world's literature? I am unable to find a single scene in that barren desert of prose which preserves the tone and color of the original. You may say that this cannot be done in prose, which amounts to saying that no prose translation, however good, can compare with a good metrical one—*quod erat demonstrandum*.

An American translation of "Faust" by Frank Claudy, of Washington, appears to be very little known. It is faithful, frequently felicitous, but follows Taylor too closely, in all the lyrical passages, to claim the merit of independence. "The Spinning Song" of Mr. Claudy differs from Taylor's only in a few unimportant words. His "Easter Choruses" show much less dependence, and are, indeed, remarkably good; and the same may be said of the "Chant of the Archangels."

Among the many who tried their hand on the isolated scenes of "Faust," no one has produced metrical effects of more exquisite quality than Percy Bysshe Shelley. His "Chant of the Archangels"

contains inspired lines such as "the world's unwithered countenance," and is of a sustained loftiness which makes one desire that he had given us more.

RAPHAEL. "The sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,
On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed : the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,
Though none its meaning fathom may ;
The world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as at creation's day."

In the Walpurgis Night scene Shelley has a line which is simply delicious in its wild, witch-like wantonness :

"And the rugged crags, ho, ho !
How they snort and how they blow."

This catches inimitably the spirit of the lines :

"Und die langen Felsennasen
Wie sie schnarchen, wie sie blasen."

The interjections "ho, ho," are not in the text, but after Shelley supplied them you wish that they had been there. This is an instance of what I have called re-creation. Shelley felt the scene so keenly, and possessed moreover such magnificent resources of language, that inspired, wondrously felicitous words sprang into their places and built up the scene in English with all the noble freedom and spontaneity of the original.

Among the several translations of the second part of "Faust," I set much store by that of John Anster, LL.D., which is accurate, dignified, and well in tune with the Olympian mood of the old Goethe. In the fifth act, with its swift dactylic measures in the various choruses of angels, Mr. Anster falls behind both Sir Theodore Martin and Bayard Taylor. The English language is so poor in dactylic rhymes, that it would seem quite excusable, as Mr. Anster has done, to abandon all pretence to reproduce the metres. Take as a mere instance of the comparative mastery of Anster, Martin, and Taylor, the beautiful Chorus Mysticus with which the second part closes :

" Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichniß ;
Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird's Ereigniß ;
Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ist es gethan ;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan."

Mr. Anster's version is as follows :

" All we see before us passing
Sign and symbol is alone ;
Here, what thought can never reach to
Is by semblances made known ;
What man's word may never utter,
Done in act—in symbol shown.
Love, whose perfect type is Woman,
The divine and human blending,
Love forever and forever
Wins us onward, still ascending."

This is a paraphrase rather than a translation, neither literal nor particularly felicitous. Sir Theodore Martin has wrestled more successfully with the metrical problem.

“ All in earth's fleeting state
As symbol is still meant;
Here the inadequate
Grows to fulfilment.
Here is wrought the inscrutable
To silence that awes us;
Love eternal, immutable,
On, ever on, draws us.”

‘Das Ewig-Weibliche’ is here inadequately rendered by “love eternal, immutable,” and the apologetic foot-note scarcely helps it. Bayard Taylor (whose second part of “Faust” was published before Sir Theodore’s) has the splendid lyrical impulse of the original which hurries us on from line to line, and unites the verse into a noble whole:

“ All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to event.
The indescribable,
Here it is done:
The Woman-Soul draweth us
Upward and on !”

V.

SERMONS FROM GOETHE

I

THE PROBLEM OF HAPPINESS

THE futility of faith, the futility of effort, the futility of life itself is being eloquently preached by a certain class of modern philosophers. It is surprising that so much energy should be expended to prove its own uselessness. It reminds one of Voltaire's epigram, *a propos* of Rousseau's "Discourses," that never had a man expended so much intellect to prove himself a brute. But this gospel of pessimism, which begins and ends in negation, can never affect the large mass of humanity. There is an indestructible vitality in the race which rejoices in action and shoots off with a rank vigor in manifold aims and activities. It is like the sap that mounts in the tree with a glorious creative ferment, and bursts into leaf and blossom and fruit. Happiness, which to the great herd is but the gratification of the immediate desire, seems always within reach and is always eagerly pursued. But though a hundred times the Juno of our pursuit turn into a

damp and clammy cloud in our embrace, we do not willingly draw the conclusion that she is not worth pursuing. We start once more and have the same experience over again, and the great majority of us go to our graves more or less disillusionized, but yet cherishing a vague notion that, if we had one more trial, we might gain the happiness which has so far eluded us. But the hope is vain; first, because happiness is no tangible and attainable thing, which can be gained and kept under lock and key; and secondly, because it is in its very nature to elude him who pursues it.

The first of these propositions is too self-evident to need explanation. But the second, though it ought to be equally self-evident, contains subtleties enough to furnish a theme for discussion. This postulate that happiness is never caught by pursuit, is the central doctrine of the Second Part of Goethe's "Faust," and, in a scarcely less conspicuous degree, of "Wilhelm Meister." Browning deals with it, or rather fumbles gropingly about it in "Paracelsus;" and George Eliot illustrates it with great strength and lucidity in "Daniel Deronda," and incidentally in "Romola," "Middlemarch," and "Scenes from Clerical Life." All great thinkers have concerned themselves more or less with it; but not all have arrived at Goethe's conclusion, which, however, both religion and experience tend to enforce. In one sense it is but an amplification and philosophical variation of Christ's teaching of self-sacrifice and charity, though without reference to any heavenly

reward. In another sense it is an anticipation of Herbert Spencer's doctrine of altruism, and a demonstration of the futility of the old eudemonistic philosophies.

Let us consider the problem in some of its important bearings. Wilhelm Meister starts out in the world, as every young man is apt to do, as a frank eudemonist ; i.e., as one bent upon achieving his own happiness. He blunders woefully, sacrifices with unthinking selfishness other lives to his own notions of felicity, and reaps the consequences of his acts. Pleasure-seeking, so far from bringing happiness, spins him into a web of manifold difficulties. The conviction, enforced by experience, grows upon him that not in seeking the gratification of every lawless impulse, but in self-development, is happiness to be found. He then sets out in quest of culture in the most comprehensive sense, not only cultivation of the mind, by reading and intercourse with intellectual men and women, but also cultivation of manners, and the acquisition of that noble presence which was to be an outward expression of a manly and self-reliant character. This second quest like the first ends, however, in temporary failure. It is not to be denied that this new eudemonism (for it is nothing else) is nobler than the old ; but it is far from solving the problem. Wilhelm is apparently not much happier in the pursuit of culture than he was in the pursuit of pleasure. He feels himself at a disadvantage as a *bourgeois*, among the rich and magnificent aristocrats with

whom he associates, and his self-esteem frequently suffers. By a slow growth, induced by the culture which he has acquired, his tastes change; he becomes interested in his fellow-men and their concerns; and gradually the attainment of happiness for himself becomes subordinated to his work for the welfare of his kind. He studies medicine, and in the practical duties of his profession, helping the weak and alleviating suffering, he attains a degree of contentment and well-being which has hitherto been unknown to him. In other words, when he has abandoned the direct pursuit of happiness, happiness comes to him.

In "Faust" the same doctrine is still more forcibly taught. Faust, having turned his back upon the pursuit of knowledge (because it seems futile and joyless), agrees with Mephistopheles that, when he shall by the Devil's aid have reached the moment of absolute bliss, to which he would say: "Stay, thou art fair," his soul shall, for all eternity, belong to Mephistopheles. The tempter puts all sorts of sensual pleasures in his way, but they fail to satisfy. Sin brings its retribution—remorse and misery untold. Then comes, in the beginning of the Second Part, Faust's reawakening to the activities of life; his entrance upon the arena of practical life as a statesman and the gradual unfolding of his intellectual powers, symbolized by the flight to Greece and his discourse with the phantoms of Hellenic and Egyptian mythology in the classical Walpurgis night. He passes through the

same stages of development as Wilhelm Meister, grows gradually from eudemonism into altruism, and finds happiness when he has entirely abandoned the pursuit of it. The moment to which he would say: "Stay, thou art fair," does not come to him by the agency of Mephistopheles, but through an experiment in draining a large tract of land, hitherto sterile, breathing miasma, and preparing it for the habitation of generations yet unborn. Critics, trained in the Romantic traditions, have never wearied of ridiculing this device, regarding it as a most trivial and prosaic *dénouement*. But this proves only how far Goethe was in advance of his age. We can scarcely conceive of a nobler kind of happiness than that of Faust, when blind and old, he stands on his tower, seeing in spirit the blessings which his labors will confer upon millions of his fellow-men. This is the moment of absolute delight. And, as soon as he has pronounced the fatal words, "Stay, thou art fair," he falls back dead; not, however, to be delivered up to Mephistopheles, but to be borne upward in triumph by the heavenly hosts.

George Eliot's treatment of this problem is very different from Goethe's, but her solution is essentially the same. What she primarily concerns herself with is man's attitude toward the moral law as the determining factor of his fate. The individual is organically coherent with his environment, by which his duties are defined, and whatever happiness is to be found on earth results from the fulfil-

ment of these duties. The attempt to escape—to take a short cut to happiness—always avenges itself and brings misery. If happiness is not found in submission to duty (and sometimes it may not be) far less is it to be found in rebellion against it. George Eliot's works supply abundant situations illustrating these propositions. Take, for instance, the case of Romola. She has made a mistake in marrying Tito Melema. Her imperfect knowledge of life had made her an easy prey to the superficial charms of the handsome and slippery Greek. Her love is short-lived; soon she learns to despise, and at last to hate and loathe, her husband. Her strong and pure nature revolts against the degrading union with this base character, and she flees, not to pleasure, but to renunciation! When in her indignation at Tito's unworthiness, she believes herself justified in breaking the marriage bond, Duty meets her with its categorical demand in the person of Savonarola. He commands her to return. Tito's unworthiness has not absolved her from her obligation as his wife. Take up thy cross and bear it; do not weakly throw it away. In the fulfilment of a burdensome duty (even though it is painful and difficult) there is blessing. The attempt to escape from the consequences of one's own actions is like trying to run away from one's shadow.

This is the substance of Savonarola's message, and it is the message that George Eliot is constantly repeating. One would suppose, then, that Romola, after her return to her husband, would realize this

blessedness to its full extent. But here again the author's beautiful fidelity to the facts of existence restrains her. Romola experiences no ecstatic happiness, no keen sense of beatitude. These exalted states are rare in our mortal life. But she gains in time a wise and gentle resignation, a half-sorrowful satisfaction in well-doing, and a noble elevation of character which make her a blessing to her kind.

To Gwendolen, in "Daniel Deronda," the same message is delivered under similar circumstances. She, too, has made an unhappy marriage, though from far less worthy motives. She has married Grandcourt with her eyes open, well knowing what he is. Her womanhood is daily degraded by its bondage to this coarse and brutal character. Duty encounters her in the person of Daniel Deronda. She yearns passionately to escape from the position which her own vulgar ambition and the worldliness of her friends have prepared for her. She does at last escape by an act which, before the tribunal of a stern conscience, is next door to murder. Now, then, the fairyland of freedom will open its golden portals to receive her! No; far from it. Her expectation is disappointed. Daniel Deronda, for whose approval she hungers, pronounces again the inexorable law—there is no happiness to be found in escape from duty. The world is so constituted, and we are ourselves so constituted, that we visit retribution upon ourselves for our own sins. Society joins in enforcing the moral law by which it can alone

exist ; and inflicts its punishment upon us through our most sensitive fibres. Misery—a long, dreary life of expiation, is the penalty Gwendolen pays for her attempt to take the law into her own hands.

Closely akin to the philosophy of George Eliot, as bearing upon this subject, is the spirit which pervades the poetry of Tennyson. He, too, preaches submission to duty and the futility of rebellion. He declares his faith in the reign of law, and finds the evidence of man's progress in his gradual self-conquest, and in the subordination of passion to duty. In this way he rises to loftier heights and attains the only happiness attainable on earth, which is indeed not rapture, but a tempered felicity, a grave self-respect and contentment. I have not the space to quote ; but I believe this to be a fairly correct summary of Tennyson's moral teaching. It is not the attitude one would naturally expect of a poet ; for poets are rarely conformists ; they are supposed to have a streak of defiance in their blood and a native sympathy with revolt. With the exception of Wordsworth (and in a lesser degree, Southey), I know no English poet of eminence who has espoused so emphatically the cause of duty against that of passion. The pervading note in Shelley, for instance, is a breathless and utterly lawless aspiration ; a millennial disregard of all the hampering conditions to which human existence is subject ; a Titanic impatience overleaping all barriers ; a wild, lyrical yearning for the unattainable. A ravenous hunger for happiness is constantly burn-

ing in his soul ; and with uncontrolled individualism he takes what he conceives to be the shortest cut to the goal of his desires. But, in every instance, how wofully the result disappoints him ! No more impressive sermon has ever been preached on this text than the recently published "Life and Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley," by Professor Edward Dowden. That society has any claim upon the individual and may justly demand a certain degree of respect for its convictions and usages, seems never to have occurred to Shelley ; and that the social code of morals, no matter how oppressive in individual cases, has, and must always have, a certain rationality, was an idea which he utterly scouted. Sensitive he was, in the extreme. Life played with a rough bow upon his quivering nerves ; and his suffering was pitiful, but not undeserved.

Robert Browning, who is constantly approaching this problem, is drawn by his sympathies in the direction of Shelley rather than that of Tennyson. He preaches frankly the rights of passion ; and derides in his heroes all pusillanimous regard for duty. Take, for instance this, in "The Statue and the Bust," where the question is one of surrender to passion or resistance :

"I hear your reproach : 'But delay was best ;
For their end was a crime.' Oh, a crime will do,
As well, I reply, to serve for a test
As virtue golden through and through,
Sufficient to vindicate itself
And prove its worth at a moment's view."

In twenty passages at least, which I could quote, if not in a hundred, he preaches the same doctrine in a rich and varied vocabulary which, if not convincing, is marvellously subtle and alluring to every ardent eudemonist who may be foolish enough to put it into practice. What Browning contends is that passion is the expression of the personality at its flood-tide ; it is the man's or the woman's power at its climax ; it is the rich blossoming of the soul ; and the failure to obey its prompting is a sacrilege, a wasting of golden moments which will never return. It is in these moments that life reaches out for its fulfilment ; and dying without having tasted their sweetness is death, indeed ; is sterility and failure. It is as if the plant should die without having blossomed. The moral objections to this doctrine are known to Browning in all their aspects ; but he chooses never to emphasize them. It is a question whether he would recommend his philosophy to anyone as a guide of action. It has its justification in verse, no doubt ; and throws light into recesses of our nature which, but for this poet, might not be so well illuminated. But let anyone who reads Browning with a leaning toward his views of life, read Goethe and George Eliot as an antidote ; for it is in the latter that the deepest insight and the highest practical wisdom have found expression. Quite apart from the fact that society must, for its own protection, punish non-conformity in morals, the pursuer of pleasure, for its own sake, or his own sake, will always have the experience of

Ixion—he will embrace a cloud. Even from a purely philosophical point of view the words of Christ are true: "He that seeketh his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life, for my sake, shall find it."

There is no direct evidence that George Eliot was indebted to Goethe for the moral which she teaches in her novels. The paper in her volume of essays called "Three Months in Weimar" does not indicate any extensive familiarity with German literature. In her "Life" by Cross I am able to find but two references to Goethe, one quoting an opinion concerning Spinoza, and the other recording the reading of the First Part of "Faust" in the original: neither of these passages gives any hint that she had penetrated beneath the surface. Whether Mr. Lewes, who wrote the well-known "Life of Goethe," may have called her attention to the German poet's doctrine of happiness is a question which is difficult to decide. It lies, perhaps, nearer to suppose that she may have been stimulated by Herbert Spencer's doctrine of altruism, which is but a modification of the lesson taught in "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister."

I know that to English readers this may appear a surprising statement; for a man who was bent above all things upon self-culture—who regarded all relations of life as tributary to his own development—could scarcely be, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, an altruist. But Goethe is not the only man who has taught a philosophy which he was not

able to practise. It is quite possible for a man to be intellectually in advance of his moral development—to see with his intellect what he may not have the power to illustrate in his conduct. In other words, Goethe had reached the moral stage of Faust in the Third, or possibly the Fourth Act of the Second Part of the drama; but he had not yet entered upon the Fifth and final Act.

II.

THE VICTIMS OF PROGRESS.

THERE is a scene in the Second Part of Goethe's "Faust" which furnishes me with a text for what may prove a tale or a sermon or a social essay. I have known so many of the victims of progress, and I have, on the whole, such a kindly feeling for the majority of them, that I cannot find it in my heart to tell them, *in propria persona*, of how small account they are in the cosmic economy. By shielding myself behind the mighty back of Goethe I shall manage to make him say what I wish to say, and yet avoid the brutal frankness of a personal critic.

On the top of a hill in Faust's domain lived an aged and highly respectable couple, named Philemon and Baucis. It happened that the site upon which their cottage and the adjoining chapel were situated was the only eminence in the kingdom fit for an astronomical observatory; and Faust,

being anxious to found such an institution, offered to buy the old people's property for more than it was worth. They, however, refused to part with it, and attributed to Faust all sorts of sinister motives for wishing to deprive them of what was rightfully theirs. The latter, fired with zeal for the welfare of society at large, sent out "three strong men" (one of whom proved to be Mephistopheles in disguise) to eject Philemon and Baucis from their cottage, and to move them, if need be, by force, to a new and more attractive home which he had prepared for them. The three strong men exceeded their instructions, burned the cottage and the chapel, and the old people died of fright.

This is the story : and it is needless to say that it has puzzled the commentators exceedingly. It would be comparatively plain sailing, if it were not for the fact that it is distinctly said that Faust was justified in acting as he did. When, in the next scene, the Gray Sisters—Care, Want, Necessity, and Guilt—knock at his door, Guilt is excluded. The very cheap explanation that Goethe meant to teach, man's liability to error, however wise he became, accordingly does not apply ; for if Faust's act was an error, he would surely not be free from guilt. No ; there is no escape from the conclusion that the author meant to declare that the man who, in his efforts to benefit the race, unavoidably injures individuals, is not to be blamed. The offence of Philemon and Baucis was that, without any fault of their own, they were unable to keep pace with the evolu-

tion of humanity. They claimed the right to live and think in their own old-fashioned way, and to remain unaffected by the progress of the age. They were so eminently respectable, religious, and conservative that it followed, as a matter of course, that any one who did not agree with them must be a dangerous innovator—an enemy of society. Baucis intimated that Faust was a wizard, and that he “offered up human sacrifices in the night to strange gods;” she held up her hands in holy horror at the unheard-of sacrilege of his reputed speech and action. He became a bugbear to her, and nothing could be too monstrous to be credited, if it related to him. And yet, as the reader knows, Faust’s sleepless desire and dominating passion, at this final stage of his career, were to benefit humanity. He was the altruistic type, as Goethe conceived it, in its perfection.

I dare say we have all known Philemon and Baucis, and recognize their features, as here represented, to be true. The hostile attitude toward “the spirit of the age” which is here punished, and held to be worthy of punishment, is characteristic of the larger portion of what is called respectable society. There has probably never been an age when old people did not mourn the degeneracy of the times, and sigh for the good old days, when they were young. If this regret were justified, the inference would be inevitable that humanity had been going steadily down hill, and was worse off to-day than it had ever been in the past. We know, however, that

the tendency of history has been toward higher social conditions and a gradual improvement in the condition of the average man ; for it is by the status, not of the favored few, but of the vast mass, that a century must be judged. The farther back we go the greater we find, generally speaking, the contrast to be between the lives of the ruling classes and those of the dumb and toiling masses. The progress of civilization is properly gauged by its gradual elevation of the average of happiness ; and this is effected, not so much by the increased splendor of the rich, as by the increased comfort of the poor. A gradual rearrangement of economic forces is taking place, tending in this direction.

If, then, the watchword of advancing civilization is "the greatest good of the greatest number," it follows that there will always be a minority whose interests are likely to be sacrificed. The path of progress is strewn with victims whose only fault was that they were superfluous—that the life-blood of the age did not pulsate in their veins. They are waste tissue in the body social, and would, as such (unless they are carried off), impede the vital circulation. Philemon and Baucis are perpetually being sacrificed ; and perpetually reappear to be sacrificed anew. They are such worthy and admirable people that it is difficult to understand how they have deserved such a cruel fate. Not necessarily in the summary manner in which "Faust" disposes of them are they being eliminated (for that action is, of course, symbolical), but in a hundred ways they are pushed aside, tram-

pled upon—immolated to the relentless spirit of the age. The current of time speeds away from them, and leaves them, high and dry, like useless dross upon its banks. They do not, indeed, suspect how dead they are ; but keep up a semblance of life by railing against that which they do not understand ; which, perhaps, they have made no effort to understand, finding denunciation easier than investigation. They fight facts with sentiments, and pride themselves on having made out an impregnable argument. Forgetting that beauty is a purely relative term—a purely personal impression—they imagine that they have proved a thing to be wrong if they find it revolting to their own sense of beauty. Mediæval feudalism presents a very picturesque spectacle, and its gradual departure has been lamented by the Philemons of each succeeding generation, who saw only the loss of ancient romance, without observing the corresponding gain in general comfort and welfare, which follows in the footsteps of advancing industrialism. And Baucis, who is at heart a bitter aristocrat, observes in her kitchen the unpleasant phases of democracy and sighs for the good old times when masters could command and servants obey.

"Talk of the pursuit of happiness," said a house-keeping member of Baucis's sex to me recently ; "and you say the Constitution guarantees it to women. Well, nothing would conduce more to my happiness than twelve hours of absolutism in which to avenge all the wrongs I have suffered in twelve

years from my servants. But no law, as far as I can discover, takes any account of my happiness, while there are at least a dozen that concern themselves with that of the servant-girl. If she chooses to sue me for any sort of fancied injury, or merely to extort money, she is likely, by virtue of her inferior position, to have both judge and jury on her side, as I have found to my cost on two occasions ; while if she steals from me or otherwise injures me, I have to pocket my loss, knowing that the chances are against me in an American court, and that I ought to be happy if I escape a prosecution for libel."

It was useless to argue with her, of course, for Baucis's sex has not its *forte* in argument ; but she declared, with unconscious humor, that democracy was a detestable thing, and that if it were not for her husband's business she would emigrate to Russia. The greatest good of the majority, she insisted, involved the greatest misery of the minority—to which she and I had the misfortune to belong. It was a paradoxical statement and considerably overshoot the mark ; but it had a modicum of truth in it, and I cannot withhold my sympathy from Baucis, even though I do not agree with her.

There is a particular reason why I feel sorry for Baucis, and am scrupulous to do her full justice, and that is because, if I live long enough, I may myself become a Philemon. The vanguard of one age is apt to become the rear-guard of the next ; and at the rate at which the century is moving there is a possibility that I may not manage to keep up with it.

Comparatively rare are the men and women in whom the progressive spirit keeps pace with the world about them, and who at seventy judge as justly concerning the tendencies of the times as they did at forty. We are apt to ossify with age; our sympathies are more on their guard, and we cling with a natural predilection to that which was contemporary with our prime. Goethe is the most radiant exception to this rule that I can recall, although Gladstone and Darwin follow close behind him. I do not mean to imply, of course, that all change is progress and that all tendencies which are widespread and general are therefore worthy of approval; but, broadly speaking, humanity moves forward (though with many distracting whirlpools and eddies which tend backward or nowhere); and it is the test of a vigorous intellect and a vital personality to be able to discover in which of these tendencies its real progress is manifested. Every quack and pseudo-reformer who hawks his panacea for social ills on the platform or through the press claims to be the champion of progress, and dubs every one who opposes him an old fogey and an obscurantist. But no one need be troubled by such names, as long as he stands in the thick of the fight, and has a strong conviction of his usefulness. We must work while it is day; for the night cometh, when no man can work.

It is only when we hold aloof, because we feel that the age has outstripped us, or because we are dissatisfied with the spirit which prevails about us,

or because we feel beforehand the futility of all endeavors on our part to oppose that of which we disapprove; it is then that we become Philemons. When we have reached that stage it does not matter much, as far as the world is concerned, if we order our shrouds, or perish, as the original Philemon did, of stupid fright. Faust in his typical quality, as the representative of society, has then a perfect right to oust us from our inheritance, and we have no right to complain if the "three strong men" of action take possession of the soil which was ours, but which we have lost through our inability to use it for our own benefit and that of our fellow-men:

" For only he earns life and liberty
Who daily conquers them anew."

VI.

GOETHE'S RELATIONS TO WOMEN.

WHEN an author, even after his death, continues to live, and his influence goes on growing from generation to generation, it is safe to assume that such survival is not accidental. No amount of artificial enthusiasm on the part of a coterie of worshippers will be able to keep a poet alive whose message, addressed to his own time, has no significance to posterity. What primarily secures survival is being in the current of the world's intellectual development; being a link, and perhaps an indispensable one, in the intellectual evolution of humanity. It is in this capacity that Goethe demands the world's attention. There have been greater poets than he, greater statesmen, and greater scientists, but there never has been a man in modern times of so many-sided endowments and varied intellectual equipment. Taking him all in all, he is the most complete man in modern history. In fact he aspired consciously for this completeness. He developed himself consciously on all sides of his nature. His ideal, which he embodied in the Greek word *καλοκάγαθία*, was self-culture, an harmoni-

ous development of body and mind, of his physical and intellectual being. He applied a sagacity and a largeness of vision to the interpretation of life which, I fancy, has never been equalled. A more calmly impartial and fearless *Œdipus* never approached the Sphinx offering to solve her riddle.

"The desire to raise the pyramid of my existence, the base of which is already laid, as high as possible into the air, absorbs every other desire, and scarcely ever leaves me," he wrote to his friend Lavater in his youth, and throughout his long life he never wavered in this purpose. This declaration meant something more than the mere determination to rise in the world as far as his talents would permit. It meant that he had fashioned for himself an ideal of high and free humanity which he meant gradually to realize in his own inward and outward self. He meant to allow no person, relation, or circumstance to interfere with this purpose and to subordinate all ambitions, passions, and desires to its realization.

This is the key-note of Goethe's life ; it is the theme so richly varied through the vivid and entertaining chapters of his autobiography. Let us just as well admit that it was not a Christian ideal. In its essence it was Greek and intrinsically pagan. The Hellenic ideal of culture ignored (as did Goethe's) the educational value of suffering. The whole range of sentiments and emotions which took possession of the world with the introduction of Christianity was, generally speaking, a sealed book

to the pagan philosopher. Not that acts of heroic self-sacrifice are unknown to Greek literature ; but, taking the whole tendency of Hellenic civilization, you find that it strove to develop the individual to the highest perfection and recognized his right to subjugate the world to his uses, as far as his powers permitted—make it tributary to his own existence. Though we exercise this right (with slight legal restraints) at the present day, and abjectly admire the man who does it most successfully, we hypocritically profess a philosophy which teaches the beauty of self-abnegation and altruistic devotion to the cause of humanity.

Quite apart, then, from moral considerations, let us see how Goethe applied this pagan principle of life and what he achieved by its guidance. This is indeed a most interesting inquiry, for Goethe is, as far as I am aware, the only conspicuous modern man who has professed an egoism so complete and consistently practised it. That both in "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister" he points to altruism as the higher philosophy, and makes both his heroes ultimately find happiness in devotion to the happiness of their fellow-men, is irrelevant. It shows that Goethe was capable of conceiving a type morally above himself, and that he did not suppose that the stage of development which he had himself reached was by any means final. For though he was by nature kindly and spent one-sixth of his income in charity, he certainly never rose to the moral height of Faust in the last act of the Second Part. He loved his

friends so long as they had something to contribute to his life, and he dropped them or shook them off when he had exhausted their educational value. That may appear a harsh statement, but it is unquestionably true. It was especially in his relations to women that he exhibited this side of his nature.

Take, for instance, the episode with Frederica Brion, the daughter of the pastor at Sesenheim. He professes to have loved Frederica. She was a new phenomenon to him, and in a half-literary way he delighted in her rural simplicity, kindness of heart, and artless prattle. From the very first she appeared to him as the heroine of a book; and the whole household struck him by its resemblance to Parson Primrose's household in Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield." So vivid became this fancy that he seems to have lived, during his visits to the parsonage, more in the book than in the reality, and to have assigned to himself, half involuntarily, the part of the villain, Mr. Burchell. This rôle did not satisfy him, however, and he soon began to play the part of the honest lover in so far as his literary character (which he never quite could get rid of) would permit him. That, after much masquerading, he ended by falling seriously in love, admits of no doubt; but as soon as he had assured himself that his affection was returned, the delight of pursuit was naturally at an end; and the delight of possession, which to most lovers would have been an ample compensation, caused him more disquietude than pleasure. He had to ask himself now what oblige-

tion he had incurred in return for that which he had accepted. He had to readjust his life with reference to this new element which he had introduced into it. And this he could not make up his mind to do. Frederica had awakened in his soul all the emotions she was capable of awakening, and when he came to contemplate her as a disturbing factor in his scheme of existence, she lost much of her fascination. Instead of furthering his serene self-development, she threatened to interfere with it by the claim which the mere fact of her love seemed to make upon his interest and attention. In order to escape the responsibility and the pain of a definite rupture, he betook himself away, and by cruel neglect allowed the relation to dwindle away into nothing. He was too young at that time, and withal too emotional, not to suffer himself a large share of the pain which he inflicted. The image of Frederica, reaching him tearfully her hand at their parting, pursued him and caused him much misery. Though he strove in nowise to embellish his conduct, and for a while was a prey to remorse, he could not persuade himself to return and manfully assume the responsibility for his actions. Instead of that he sought consolation in literary composition. He reproduced his own relation to Frederica in that of Weisslingen to Maria in his drama, "*Götz von Berlichingen*," and imposed a vicarious penance upon the faithless lover by making him fall into the toils of a remorselessly cruel and ambitious woman, who used him for her own evil purposes.

This whole proceeding is characteristic from beginning to end, and is repeated, with variations, in all Goethe's love affairs. Love, as the world is now arranged, is supposed to lead to marriage. But marriage contains so large an element of the unforeseen, and imposes so many complex duties and obligations, that a man who has a definite scheme of self-development upon which his heart is set, may well shrink from embarking upon so venturesome an enterprise. But in that case, you will say, he has no right to fall in love. No honorable man will court the favor of a woman and win her affection unless he has counted the cost and means to defray it. There is, however, also something to be said on the other side of the question. Nature has treated the male creature rather unfairly in this matter, having implanted in him a strong passion which draws him, in spite of his better judgment, toward the other sex. This passion befuddles his reason and disables him from seeing and thinking clearly. The common callow youth, who is but a mediocre specimen of his kind (and who, to show his quality, ought to be numbered, not named), rushes blindly into the first net that the female enchanter has spread for him, and in his maudlin felicity feels not the meshes of fate in which he is entangled. He marries, reproduces his imbecility in half a dozen specimens of his own kind, and struggles patiently with the troubles incident upon his blessed estate.

Now, it may be that this man is wise. He could probably not fulfil any higher destiny. But the

rare, the exceptional man, richly endowed, who sees the benevolent imposition which Nature practises upon him and refuses to play into her hands, is he, after all, to be so ruthlessly condemned? Marriage is a social institution, admirably devised to preserve the social order and an even progressive development. It does not primarily concern itself with the happiness of the two contracting parties, but with that of the society to which they belong. But, of course, the two callow simpletons have no suspicion of this surreptitious design on Nature's part; but innocently believe that the institution was designed to secure their own individual felicity, which undoubtedly in many cases it does. But even so wise a man as Emerson was of opinion that the poet, the scholar, the man who was bent upon accomplishing some high purpose, had better not give hostages to fortune. In nine cases out of ten his purpose will, without anyone's fault, be thwarted, and by numerous unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances be diverted from its original aim. He may, indeed, yet accomplish much; but he will fall short of the highest achievement attainable by a man of his gifts.

It is as a special advocate for Goethe that I have advanced this argument. I am convinced that it was the way the problem presented itself to him. He has nowhere expressed himself on this subject, but his conduct is everywhere governed by the same principle. He was always very susceptible to the charms of women, and the long series of his *affaires*

de cœur, beginning with his sixteenth and ending in the neighborhood of his eightieth year, exhibits, *mutatis mutandis*, the same general characteristics as the one of which the Alsatian parson's daughter was the heroine.

Omitting the Wetzlar episode, in which Charlotte Buff figured, the chapter which chronologically comes next has for a heading the name of Lili Schönemann, the daughter of a rich Frankfurt banker. Lili was, as her portraits show, a beauty, and altogether a statelier and more accomplished lady than Frederica. When Goethe made her acquaintance she was scarcely more than a *Backfisch*, which is the German term for that intermediate stage when a girl is neither a child nor yet a grown woman. She was a trifle pert, and practised the arts of young ladyhood with all the *empressement* of a novice. She was a coquette, full of moods and caprices, but at heart (as her later history shows) a fine and sterling character, or, at all events, she developed in the course of time into a sterling character through the experience of wifehood and motherhood. The house of her mother (her father had died when she was but five years old) was the rendezvous of all who made pretension to elegance in the social world of Frankfurt, and a certain consciousness of her social importance gave to the young girl an air of high breeding, security of bearing, and charm of manner. To Goethe, who had not before associated with women of that type, she was a revelation. When he stood leaning over the piano and watched

her nimble fingers travelling with amazing skill over the keys, admiring the natural grace of her movements, her image sank into his soul and took complete possession of him. It was the newness of the type which she presented that primarily fascinated him ; and though the thought of her literary value was then far from his mind, the feelings which she awakened in him demanded immediate expression and inspired that most exquisite group of lyrics which has ever since been associated with her name.

In all his former affairs his conquests had been too easy. He had been too conscious of his masculine superiority, too self-reliant in his love to

"Taste the raptured sweetness
Of her divine completeness."

The torment, the fever, and the fret of love's suspense, doubt, and burning humility he had never known. Frederica had fallen, like a ripe peach, into his lap, as soon as he gently shook the tree, and in the case of Charlotte Buff there is every evidence to show that he refrained from shaking the tree, because he felt equally certain that the fruit would drop. As in that contingency the question of ownership would arise, with many unpleasant complications, he preferred to run away before the temptation to pluck the forbidden fruit became irresistible. But now, in the presence of this imperious and capricious Lili, he learned for the first time in his life the *rôle* of a petitioner. She was a woman of the world, or

thought herself one, and though she was strongly drawn to the handsome young poet (and in an unguarded moment told him so), she did not intend to be won easily. Her dignity demanded that he should suffer and make sacrifices for her sake, and if he passed creditably through the purgatory which she deliberately prepared for him, she meant to reward him with her own sweet and distinguished self. If in a moment of confidence she was betrayed into forgetting her dignity, this neglected attribute was apt to demand reparation by asserting itself the more at their next meeting. She also professed what appeared to Goethe a monstrous sentiment, viz., a desire to attract all men indiscriminately, to please and entertain them, and to feel herself the centre of an admiring throng. He, too, had his dignity to maintain ; and petted and spoiled as he had been by doting women, he could not consent to be one of a number who rejoiced in her favor. If he could not be lord supreme and sole usurper, he wished to be told so once for all, so that he might tear himself away and quit forever the frivolous and unprofitable life into which he had been led by her. But such a decisive declaration Lili would not make, or if she made it, it had no perceptible effect on her conduct. Accordingly they quarrelled, made up and quarrelled again. German as he was, and by nature serious, he was utterly at a loss to comprehend her "flirtatious" temperament. Possibly he regarded it as an indication of moral obliquity. But so great was Lili's power over him, that the fascination she

exerted rose superior to moral considerations. For the very reason that he never felt quite sure of her, he returned after each estrangement, and finally, through the machinations of a benevolent friend, bound himself to her by a formal engagement. But what Grimm calls the demoniac element in Goethe's nature made him chafe under every obligation, however shadowy, and yearn to throw off a yoke, however lightly it pressed. He always cooled, at least temporarily, after having achieved a conquest; and the plain, prosaic scenes which in Love's comedy are apt to follow the poetic prologue, he always shrank from playing a part in.* Under these circumstances he resorted to his usual remedy: he ran away, this time to Switzerland. On his return it was probably his intention to break off the engagement, in spite of his love for Lili, which he had not succeeded in eradicating. But instead of that, he fell under her charm more completely than ever. He disapproved of her, and yet adored her; he acted as her cavalier at balls and parties, because his jealousy would not permit him to stay away; he rebelled against his thralldom in prose and verse; and finally, seeing that he was being alienated from the life work to which his genius called him, and

* This reluctance to transpose the poetry of love into the prose of matrimony is the subject of Henrik Ibsen's play, *Love's Comedy*. The heroine, Svanhild, marries the man whom she does not love and separates from him whom she does love, lest the harmony of life's highest bliss might be jarred into a matrimonial discord.

drawn into a whirlpool of inane social festivities (which were the very atmosphere of her being), he took advantage of one of their frequent lovers' quarrels and allowed the engagement to lapse.

His motive is here distinctly the same as before. He loved Lili, and suffered keenly by their separation; but as she would not fit into his scheme of existence, but rather strove to fit him into her own, he had no choice but to break with her, unless he chose to modify his plan of life or subordinate it to his relation to her. It is true that Lili, on one occasion, when the parents on both sides raised objections to their union, proposed to flee with him to America; and it is even possible that she would have had the strength of character to make this sacrifice, if he had been willing to accept it. But that kind of heroism, in the great crises of life, is a very different thing from the heroism of daily renunciation of cherished habits and ambitions. The same Lili who would cheerfully have embarked for the wilds of an unknown world for the sake of the man she loved, would probably not, for his sake, have gone to a ball in a high-necked dress, or resisted the temptation to flirt, though she knew it made him miserable.

Though of all the women who figure in Goethe's autobiography, Lili was, as it appears to me, best qualified to make him happy, I believe he acted wisely in refusing to become enslaved to a life that was uncongenial to him. She was too definite and too considerable a personality (which Frederica was

not) to avoid exerting a strong influence upon him, and, in short, playing havoc with his scheme of life. What this influence would have been we are only left to conjecture ; but I fancy that, though in one respect it would have been wholesome, in this it would have been injurious. She would, of course, have saved him from the irregular domestic relation with Christiane Vulpius, which directly and indirectly caused him much suffering and some moral deterioration. She would, when the mere foam and froth of youthful exuberance had blown away, have stood at his side as an affectionate and dignified wife who would have kept his regard and surrounded him with an atmosphere of order, comfort, and sympathy. For into such a wife Lili developed in her marriage with a much lesser man, the Alsatian nobleman, Baron von Türkheim. And in later years, so far from cherishing a petty resentment, she declared that she owed to Goethe her moral and intellectual existence. But though we may concede that his life would have run more smoothly with such a helpmate, there is to my mind very little doubt that we should have lost the only exemplar which the world possesses of a career devoted exclusively to self-development. We should have had another Goethe and a different one, and, taking him all in all, probably a lesser one. I know all that can be said against this view ; but it does not seem to me to be of sufficient weight to reverse my judgment. That Olympian isolation of Goethe which makes him loom up above his contemporaries in solitary grandeur

has always appeared to me highly impressive. I do not doubt that with a wife like Lili he would have found the problems that beset him much simplified. But, as he has himself emphasized, happiness is not the highest aim of existence. The domestic type of man who lives to propagate and to extract a fair amount of comfort out of life is so frequent that we need waste no regrets because Goethe did not add one to their number. He started out, as so very few men do, with a clear and definite scheme of life, and though tossed hither and thither by youthful passion and unforeseen circumstances, he yet possessed the strength to adhere to it, and to test its utmost virtue. The compass which guided his course was not free from occasional aberrations when disturbing magnets were brought into its vicinity, but it quickly recovered its true bearings after each aberration. It is, however, no imputation against its excellence to believe that, with a magnet of Lili's attractive and disturbing force in its immediate nearness, it might have recorded the deviations and variations common to compasses thus situated. And the world would, in that case, have been the loser.

Furthermore, to abandon metaphor, I do not believe that Goethe would have found time to record his inner and outer life so minutely if he had been wedded to Lili. As it is, his is the most completely recorded life which history or literature has to show. / The eighteenth century was the age of individualism *par excellence*, and it was the fashion to be elaborately autobiographical.

This self-centred and minutely descriptive tendency of Goethe was undoubtedly in the air. The cultivated citizen of that day had but vague and shadowy notions of the state and did not primarily regard himself as a member of a body social. His first obligation was to himself and his own interests, and his most absorbing business was to study and develop himself. Goethe was in nowise exceptional in forming this beautiful scheme of using the world as an educative agency for his own development, but he was exceptional in adhering to his scheme and carrying it out, in making every life that came in contact with his own tributary to his, and transforming what was individual and accidental in it into high literary symbols and enduring human types. What an exquisite result has, for instance, the Sesenheim episode yielded! A sweet, commonplace young girl, with a *nez retroussé* and some poor rural accomplishments, becomes, by the magic of his art, a permanent character in literature, an immortal type of all that is most touching and beautiful in womanhood. I do not say that this was to Frederica personally a compensation. But just as Faust (in the Second Part) by deeds of repentance does penance to humanity for his sin against the individual Gretchen, so Goethe in "Götz von Berlichingen" and "Clavigo" made amends to the world for the wrong he had done Frederica. Nor can I believe, as so many critics do, that such penance is worthless. No wrong can ever be undone, and a mere emotional repentance, however much it

may benefit the penitent, is of no value to him against whom he has sinned.

“Nichts taugt Ungeduld,
Noch weniger Reue ;
Jene vermehrt die Schuld,
Diese schafft neue,”

says Goethe. He believed that a gradual recovery from all moral injury was possible as long as aspiration survived, which was to him a proof that the divine spark in the man was not yet extinct :

“Whoever aspires unweariedly
Is ne'er beyond redeeming.”

Of all Goethe's love affairs, the one which has been the subject of most serious controversy is his relation to Frau von Stein. We all know that the seventh commandment was laxly interpreted by the eighteenth century, and the society of Weimar was no less “imperfectly monogamous” than that of other cities which were the seats of courts. Goethe's fondness for Frau von Stein certainly began as an intellectual friendship, and both Grimm and Blackie believe that, though they loved each other, their relation was free from reproach. Schiller, who a short time after his arrival in Weimar writes the gossip of the place to his friend Körner, also confirms this opinion. “They say the relation is perfectly pure and blameless,” are his words. And although Weimar, like every small

town, was a hornets' nest of scandalous gossip, the general contemporary judgment appears to have been that Frau von Stein was and remained an honorable woman. The published volumes of Goethe's letters to her, which, like all love-letters not addressed to one's self, are dull reading, do not militate against this theory, though many of the *billets doux* are sufficiently passionate to give color to the opposite view.

But to begin with the beginning, Frau von Stein was not a beauty. A woman's looks are always the beginning in affairs of this sort. She had a highly-refined, sensitive, and delicate face. She was thirty-three years old and the mother of seven children. The cares and the physical drain of maternity (against which she bitterly rebelled) upon her strength had left their marks upon her features, which had a weary and faded look. Her portrait shows, however, that she must have had a fine gift of observation and probably wit. Her tastes drew her toward reading, and the books which interested her became events in her life. But domestic duties drew her toward practical things which were distasteful; hence her discontent. She had apparently not the art (which belongs to perfect health) of bearing her cross cheerfully. Being high-strung and of frail physique, hungering for the beautiful experiences which fate thus far had denied her, she furnished a piquant contrast to the artless young girls upon whom Goethe had hitherto expended his sentiment. *La femme de trente ans*, if she cares for the rôle of an

enchantress, is a far more dangerous person than *la femme de vingt ans*. The latter is but a more or less attractive specimen of the feminine gender, and the charm which she exerts is of that primitive sort that pervades all nature and lies at the base of creation. It is heightened, no doubt, by attractions which may be more or less personal ; but as a rule it is safe to say that personality at twenty is embryonic ; it is a potential thing, a promise of something which may or may not be realized. But a woman of thirty has assumed her permanent colors. She is the bud no longer, but the flower in its perfect bloom. The fragrance which emanates from her is perilously subtle, appealing even to the jaded sense which is proof against the perfume of the bud.

Frau von Stein possessed in a rare degree this subtle charm of intellectual maturity and a distinct, highly-developed personality. She had seen much of life and had survived many illusions ; but the experience which had enriched her mind and sharpened her criticism had not soured or embittered her. She could talk brilliantly and with an animation which fascinated all who were privileged to enjoy her company. But unlike most brilliant talkers she was also a good listener. She entered with warm sympathy into Goethe's literary plans, and when his thought was in the stage of ferment and vague obscurity, she gave it back to him defined and clarified.

Every man of letters who has ever enjoyed the friendship of a good woman knows the value of this

stimulating sympathy. The mere opportunity to express and explain compels him to objectify his thought—to put it outside of himself and contemplate it impartially. In the warm air of admiring regard the dormant or semi-conscious thought-germ sprouts forth rapidly and assumes a beauty which often surprises its parent. From the obvious references to her in “*Iphigenia in Tauris*,” it is plain that Frau von Stein performed to Goethe this friendly function of giving him back his own ideas clarified and often ennobled, and by her quick responsiveness stimulating his intellectual life and enlarging his sympathies. It is significant in this connection to note that she was by seven years Goethe’s senior, though I doubt if she would have liked to be reminded of it. Schiller speaks of “the gentle earnestness” of her expression and “a quite peculiar openness.” This openness was, however, more apparent than real. It was, as I fancy, one of her “subtleties.” You imagined you understood her so perfectly; but at your next meeting you discovered, perhaps, that you were wrong in all your premises—that you had not commenced to fathom her. She was frivolous to-day, deep to-morrow, revealing complexities of character which always incited to new investigation. Adorably truthful and candid as a child, she might approach you in the morning, and in the afternoon she might be the woman of the world, the lady of the court, dignified, satirical, incomprehensible. But it was this very intricate femininity of Charlotte von Stein which kept Goethe for

ten full years at her feet. Had she been less gifted he would have wearied of her enigmatical conduct. But had she been less darkly feminine—had she, with all her intellect and power of sympathy, been frank as a boy and as easily fathomable, she would have received his worship for a year perhaps, but surely not for ten.

"I cannot send you rhymes," he writes to her, "for my prosaic life swallows up these brooklets like a wide sand-waste; but the poetry of loving you, my dearest, cannot be taken away from me."

"I have no coherent thoughts, but all my thoughts cohere through you."

"I pray the Graces that they may grant my passion, and preserve in me that goodness of soul from which alone all beauty springs."

"I wish there were a vow or a sacrament which visibly and lawfully could make thee mine own. My noviciate surely was long enough to enable me to reconsider. I can no more write *you*, as I could for a long time not say *thou*! The Jews had cords with which they tied their arms during prayer; thus I wind thy sweet bonds around my arm when I address my prayer to thee and wish thee to make me share thy goodness, moderation, and patience."

"Thy love makes a beautiful climate about me, and through it I am in the way of curing myself of many a remnant of sins and defects. Thou hast restored to me my pleasure in doing good, which I had entirely lost. I did it from instinct, and I did

not feel happy in it. I beg thee, on my knees, complete thy work and make me wholly good."

This is surely not the tone of a guilty lover. Nor does it seem possible, knowing, as we do, how intimately autobiographical all Goethe's writings are, that he would have made Iphigenia, of whom Frau von Stein was the prototype, a civilizing agency and a morally elevating influence in the barbarous land of Tauris, if he had not himself experienced this very influence in his own heart. King Thoas loves in Iphigenia a being of a higher kind, whose goodness and gentleness tame his own wild nature, and who in her capacity as a priestess of Diana repels his passionate approaches, but retains her moral hold upon him, in order that she may benefit him and through him his people. This describes, *mutatis mutandis*, the character of the poet's relation to Frau von Stein, or it furnishes at least the key for its interpretation. He even violated his historical judgment in order to introduce this purely Germanic conception of womanhood in his "Iphigenia," for he surely knew as well as anyone that it was alien to Greek antiquity.

It was perfectly in keeping with this view of their relation that Frau von Stein should have taken offence at Goethe's *liaison* with Christine Vulpius. During his sojourn in Italy (1786-1787) his ideas of morality underwent a change—nay, his whole philosophy of life became modified. A certain pagan delight in nudity becomes visible in his poems and a determination to live in the senses as well as in the in-

telleet. He flung away with impatience the Germanic ideas in which he had been brought up, as remnants of a gloomy asceticism with which he had now no sympathy. Illicit relations existed round about him in the bright and laughing South, and gave offence to no one. The contemplation of the Greek statues and all the sensuous gayety and splendor of the Italian Renaissance awakened in him a kind of artistic paganism, which presently reacted upon his moral nature and made him adopt a code of ethics, in this particular chapter, which was not that of Christianity. He had the bad taste to make Frau von Stein his confidante in the *liaison* which he contracted while in Italy, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that she resented it. He evidently credited her with a "freedom from prejudice," as he would have styled it, which took no account of her womanhood. And when he took the ill-educated Christine Vulpius into his house, without benefit of clergy, she wrote him a letter which put an end to their friendship.

It is scarcely necessary to attribute her action to jealousy, although a grain of this sentiment may have entered into her very complex state of mind. Jealousy is, after all, but the shadow thrown by the light of love, and the stronger the light is, the blacker the shadow. I have no sympathy with the sneering comment that, if her relation to Goethe was perfectly platonic, a *liaison* which did not in the least encroach upon her territory ought not to have angered her. The man who with shallow

cynicism reasons in this way only reveals his own stupidity. She had a perfect right to be jealous, and she would have been either more or less than woman if she had serenely accepted the terms which Goethe offered her. Unfortunately, she took the precaution to demand her letters back and destroy them, while his were preserved and have been published in three stout volumes. And in the absence of her side of the correspondence it is difficult to judge what was the exact nature of feeling which governed her conduct. I should like to believe that it was not so much a sense of personal outrage as a bitter disappointment and sorrow at his having fallen short of her ideal of him. But in each of us, whether man or woman, there is a higher and a baser self which may alternately govern our words and actions. Frau von Stein at her best, and Frau von Stein at her worst, were as widely different persons as was Goethe at the two poles of his being. It was surely not in his Olympian capacity that he wrote her the celebrated "coffee letter," of which this is an extract :

"How much I love you I have shown by my return from Italy. What I left behind me there I will not repeat, as you received my confidence on that point in a sufficiently unfriendly manner. Unhappily, you were in a singular state of mind when I returned, and I confess candidly that the manner in which you received me caused me pain. . . . And all that before the relation existed which seems to offend you so much. And what kind of

relation is it? Who is defrauded by it? Who lays claim to the sentiments which I give the poor creature and who to the hours I spend with her? . . . I should like to add much more if I did not fear rather to offend than to conciliate you in your present state of mind. Unhappily, you have for a long while disregarded my advice in regard to coffee. It is not enough that it is often difficult morally to overcome certain impressions; you intensify by a physical means the tormenting power of sad thoughts. I cannot quite give up the hope that you will again know me as I am."

It is distinctly Goethe's pagan self, that had breathed for a year the air of the Italian Renaissance, which speaks in this letter. He professes not to be able to comprehend why the woman whom he loved, especially as she was another man's wife, should object to his *liaison* with "a poor creature" who appealed to an entirely different part of his nature. And the idea that he wronged in any way "the poor creature," by placing her in a humiliating position before the world, does not seem to have occurred to him.

This new relation of Goethe, which resulted in the birth of two children, one of whom reached manhood, had in many ways an unfortunate effect upon him. It alienated him from some of his friends, and it did not secure him that freedom from obligation and immunity from care which he regarded as essential to his self-development. The first period of cheerful companionship, after the manner of a

Greek poet with his hetæra, Goethe celebrated in a collection of poems, classic in form and feeling, entitled "Roman Elegies." But, unhappily, Christine, who had inherited a taste for strong drink, developed in the course of years habits of intemperance which caused him much annoyance and mortification. And what was worse, Goethe's handsome and promising son, August, inherited the curse, and died prematurely in Rome in consequence of a debauch. The latter's two sons, who have died within the last decade, had apparently more of the Vulpian than the Goethe strain in their composition. They remained unmarried, and no descendent of Germany's greatest poet is now surviving.

Be it said, however, to Goethe's credit, that he bore silently and patiently his domestic cross, and was the more faithful for the reason that she needed his forbearance, and because no legal tie bound him to her. In 1806, after the battle of Jena, he led her to the altar, although, fearing that such a *mésalliance* might prove socially detrimental to him, she hesitated to accept his sacrifice. When she died, in 1816, he was deeply affected, nay, gave vent to his grief with a vehemence which he scarcely exhibited on any other occasion. Though she had never been a helpmeet to him, in the sense that a wife of higher attainments might have been, she had, on the other hand, scarcely interfered with his development. The very fact that she was of a lower social station than he, made her unobtrusive, and she never displayed any vulgar desire to assert herself. In judg-

ing of the relation we must take into account the laxity of the age; for no man can be judged apart from his environment. We may find much to regret, some things, perhaps, to censure, but we shall find nothing which we may not understand.

**THE LIFE AND WORKS OF
SCHILLER.**

VII.

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF SCHILLER.

HEINE, speaking of Lessing's critics and antagonists, compares them to tiny insects which were caught in amber while it was yet viscid on the tree, and thus were accidentally immortalized. They would have shared the fate of all insect existences which perish, leaving no trace behind them, if a kindly accident (a breath of air, perhaps, or mere idle curiosity) had not induced them to alight upon an imperishable substance. This comparison applies, in a measure, to all whom chance, kinship, or common interests have brought into intimate contact with the life of a great man. They reap an unsought and involuntary immortality. They become interesting to posterity, not for any excellence of intellect or character they may have possessed, but for the influence they have exerted upon the great man and the relation they have sustained to him. As accessories to him, their personalities have an historic value. The life of a great man is thus necessarily a gallery of more or less significant portraits, all of which become conspicuous only by the

lustre which emanates from the central figure of the hero. If the literary historians of Germany are to be believed, the number of commonplace men and women who have deserved to become embalmed in the memory of Schiller is very great ; but a little critical insight will soon enable one to discriminate between those whose lives deeply intersected that of the poet, and those who merely touched it at the circumference.

At the threshold of Schiller's career we naturally encounter the faces of his father and mother. The former had commenced life as a barber, then, as was not unusual in those days, advanced to the rank of an army surgeon, and finally, after faithful service in the War of the Austrian Succession, was brevetted a captain. He was a strictly honorable and upright man, ordinarily, but by no means remarkably endowed, and deeply impregnated with that horror of the fantastic and irregular which is characteristic of most commonplace men. All his energies were engrossed in the struggle for daily bread, and he had very little patience with anyone who took a loftier view of existence and refused to subordinate its higher interests to the one all-absorbing question of gaining a livelihood. At the close of his military service this worthy man, who, in his limitations as well as his excellences, was typically German, became superintendent of the gardens and nurseries at the Duke of Würtemberg's villas, Solitude and Ludwigsburg. It was during a temporary residence of his parents at Marbach that the

poet was born, November 10, 1759. He was given the names of Johann Christoph Friedrich, which were a combination derived from the maternal as well as the paternal side of the family. He was a feeble and not very precocious child, although of course there are tales from his childhood which, in the light of later events, may be interpreted as foreshadowing future greatness.

His mother, of course, built castles in the air for him while he yet lay in the cradle, and as she knew no more exalted position than that of a clergyman, she aspired, like the Scotch matron, to see her son some day "wag his paw in a pu'pit." Thus the boy from an early age became familiar with the idea that he was destined for the church, for which his dreamy and meditative temperament seemed peculiarly to fit him. His first teacher was the worthy Protestant minister Moser, who prepared him for the Latin School, which was the preliminary step for entering a university. Schiller proved an apt pupil and as such had the misfortune to attract the attention of the Duke Karl Eugen, who was seeking recruits for a military academy which he had recently founded. In his usual despotic manner he frightened Schiller's father into accepting his bounty, ignoring his respectful remonstrance, and pledging the boy, to boot, to devote his life to the service of the Ducal House of Würtemberg. Captain Schiller had by this time a large family, and, being dependent upon the duke for his livelihood, lacked courage to persist in his opposition. The boy was thus

forced to give up his clerical ambition, and to confine his aspirations to the professions for which provision was made in the curriculum of the Ducal Academy. Schiller selected jurisprudence, but found this study so little to his taste that, after a brief trial, he asked and obtained permission to change his course to medicine.

When Schiller was sixteen years old the academy was removed to Stuttgart, which at that time again became the capital of the duchy and the residence of the duke. His Highness had some years before quarrelled with his chief city, which had openly expressed its disapproval of his dissolute life, and his unscrupulous methods of getting money by selling his subjects to fight as mercenaries against liberty in the New World. Now it suited His Highness to forgive this monstrous ingratitude, and he accordingly returned, with his beautiful mistress, Franziska von Hohenheim, and his military academy, to Stuttgart. To the great detriment of the school, he chose to devote much of his time to its supervision. He enforced the most rigid military discipline, gave the most absurd subjects for themes and dissertations, and in a hundred petty ways interfered with the influence and authority of the professors. Schiller, to whom this machine-like existence was utterly repugnant, sought consolation in the study of Rousseau, whose revolutionary daring appealed strongly to his nature. Goethe's "Sorrrows of Werther" also fell into his hands, and Wieland's translation of Shakespeare inspired him with an ad-

miration for the great English poet which he never outlived. The discipline of the academy compelled him to pursue these studies in secret, and as the hospital ward was the only part of the school-house where a candle was allowed after nine o'clock, Schiller had himself put on the sick-list, as often as he dared, in order to be able to enjoy in peace the company of his poetical favorites. The grand thoughts of the poets began to resound through his mind and to fill him with indignant defiance against the power which, without consulting his own wish, forced him into this strait-jacket of military discipline. He yearned to break his fetters, and his yearning found vent in a drama entitled "The Robbers," which he composed in secret and secretly declaimed in remote corners of the large building to delighted audiences of admiring fellow-students. In the meanwhile the duke, who had discovered the youth's poetic ability, sought to enlist it for his own glorification and that of his mistress, and Schiller, who knew that his father's livelihood depended upon the good-will of the duke, felt in duty bound to meet the constant requisitions made upon his reluctant muse. He sang the praises of Karl Eugen and Franziska on ducal birthdays, school festivals, and other public occasions, and extolled their virtues with an ardor which apparently took no account of the ironical effect upon the audience.

In 1780, when Schiller was twenty-one years old, he was graduated from the Academy and received an appointment as military surgeon in the army of

Württemberg, with a monthly salary of eighteen florins, or between seven and eight dollars in American money. His parents, who had expected that the duke would reward magnificently their son's obedience and his ardent official eulogies, could hardly conceal their disappointment. And Schiller himself, who was all this time meditating revolt, could not have had much scruple in preparing for the press his veiled indictment of the duke's paternal despotism, knowing, as he did, that the duke had chosen to forget his promise to provide a lucrative position ; for even according to the notions of those days, eighteen florins a month barely sufficed to support a hand-to-hand struggle with existence.

Schiller's first tragedy, "The Robbers," expresses the revolt of a powerful nature against the conventional reality which places its narrow barriers, called law and custom, in his way on all sides. "I loathe this ink-wasting century," he cries, "when I read in my Plutarch of great men." A great man, according to this youthful disciple of Rousseau, should be a law unto himself. Society is arranged for the convenience and comfort of fools, not of wise men ; of pygmies, not of giants. A giant would be justified in trampling upon the laws made for the guidance of pygmy lives. But the pygmies, being so much more numerous than the giants, are, after all, collectively the stronger, and by their petty needle-pricks are apt to harass the solitary Titan, until he rises in wrath, kicks down their legal hedges and barriers, and wages war with them single-

handed. In other words, he becomes, according to the world's ideas, a malefactor, a criminal. But, according to Schiller, it is society that is chiefly to blame, not the Titan, who could not help his having been made on a larger scale than the rest. This is plainly the philosophy of Rousseau adapted to Schiller's own individual case. He chafed under the rigid discipline in the school which imposed the same machine-like routine upon several hundred differently constituted young men, taking no account of their individual tastes, talents, or temperaments. Amusing as the parallel is, when we consider that the young poet declared war against civilization because the school discipline disagreed with him, there can be no question that Karl Moor becomes a heroic robber, murderer, and malefactor, because Schiller himself, bound by considerations for his family, dared not break with the authorities which oppressed him. Most diverse judgments have been pronounced upon this youthful play by literary authorities. Matthew Arnold is of opinion that it is "violent and tiresome," forming thereby a contrast to Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen," which is "violent, but not tiresome." Wilhelm Scherer declares that the young poet shows "dramatic talent of the first order," but makes the following important strictures on "The Robbers:" "It is true that he lays on the colors too thick, that he fills the dialogue with bombastic exaggerations, that in trying to be forcible he occasionally lapses into coarseness, that he fails to make the connection between

action and character sufficiently apparent." This is all perfectly true ; but the fact still remains that "The Robbers" manifests power, and as the production of a mere youth who had not reached manhood was a notable performance. It contains the embryonic promise of a great poet.

January 13, 1782, "The Robbers" was performed for the first time on the stage at Mannheim, and proved a great success. The author, who could not resist the temptation to witness the representation, and doubted his ability to obtain a furlough, made the journey secretly and returned home the next day, intoxicated with delight. A second time he repeated the experiment, but the breach of discipline was then, owing to the indiscretion of some female friends, brought to the notice of the duke, who punished him with a fortnight's arrest. An allusion in the drama, of an uncomplimentary character, to the Grisons of Switzerland, induced some foolishly zealous patriot to make a complaint to Karl Eugen, who thereupon forbade Schiller to write anything but medical treatises. Schiller promptly responded by handing in his resignation, or, in the respectful language then in vogue, by humbly begging to be released from the ducal service. The petty despot, however, looked upon him as a piece of personal property and refused to listen to his repeated prayers for release, until the sorely harassed poet was forced to take the law into his own hands and seek freedom in flight. September 17, 1782, he fled to Mannheim with his devoted friend, the musician Streicher.

Previous to his flight, Schiller had written a considerable number of lyrical poems which he collected in a volume entitled "The Anthology for the Year 1782," but outside of the narrow circle of the author's friends the book failed to call forth any enthusiasm. The magnificent daring displayed in language and imagery, the Titanic defiance, the heaven-scaling idealism, mixed in a curious alloy with coarse voluptuousness, were qualities which puzzled the commonplace and unenlightened public of those days, but failed to arouse any lasting interest in the poet. As a financial experiment the book was a failure and Schiller, who had also been obliged to bear the expense of the publication of "The Robbers," had gradually become involved in a net of pecuniary obligations from which he could not extricate himself. His father, who had been surety for the payment of one of his son's loans, grumbled and advised a strict attention to the medical business. Under such circumstances Stuttgart could not have been an agreeable place of residence for him, even if the duke had left him free to incur further debt in the pursuit of his literary avocation.

On his arrival in Mannheim he submitted a new tragedy, "Fiesco," to Baron von Dalberg, who was then superintendent of the theatre. "Fiesco" bears the sub-title, "A Republican Tragedy," and deals with the conspiracy of the Genoese noble of that name against the tyrants Andrea and Gianettino Doria. It is a decided advance upon "The Robbers," being clearer though hardly less violent in diction,

truer in its characterization, subtler and more complex in its *motifs* and action. For all that, Dalberg pronounced it inferior to the latter drama, and Meyer, the manager, refused for a while to believe that the same author could have produced two works differing so widely in merit. This was a severe disappointment to Schiller, who had founded many daring hopes upon the anticipated success of "Fiesco." Streicher, too, who was no less sanguine, had been advancing him money for his support, so as to enable him to continue to produce great works, and it had hardly entered into his calculations that booksellers and managers should not be eager for the masterpieces, as soon as they were offered to them. The generous fellow had now actually emptied his slender purse, and his friend was unable to repay his loans. Another trouble which seems to have caused Schiller less anxiety than it did his friends was the hostility of the Duke of Würtemberg who looked upon the poet's independence as an insult to his own majesty. Undoubtedly some danger existed, and Schiller was wise in finally heeding the advice of Frau von Wolzogen, his early patroness and the mother of one of his schoolmates, who offered him a safe hiding-place on her estate, Bauerbach, in the neighborhood of Meiningen. In December, 1782, he separated from Streicher and under an assumed name marched from town to town until he reached his new home. Negotiations in the meanwhile were continued, and Dalberg, who availed himself in an ungenerous manner of Schiller's poverty, and offered him the

most foolish literary advice, finally concluded to accept "Fiesco," provided it were changed so as to suit His Excellency's taste. The author was hardly in a condition to dictate his terms, and he therefore abjectly, though with inward rebellion, ruined his play by substituting a cheerful and commonplace ending for the tragic one which the situation and the design of the characters, by a psychological necessity, demanded. The edition, however, which he prepared for the press and which was published by Schwan, in Mannheim, retained the original conclusion.

During his stay at Bauerbach (from December, 1782-July, 1783) Schiller labored indefatigably upon a new drama, "Louise Millerin," which he had commenced before his departure from Mannheim; and moreover occupied himself earnestly with historical studies which he expected to utilize for his historical tragedy, "Don Carlos." Frau von Wolzogen and her daughter Lotte made occasional visits to the estate and cheered him by their kindly interest and criticism. Nevertheless he was not happy. He had the misfortune to fall in love, or to believe himself in love, with the daughter of his hostess, and his prospects were not at that time so brilliant as to warrant any mother, and especially one of noble blood, in encouraging his matrimonial aspirations. It may have been his ill success as a lover, and the expectation of finding higher favor in his courtship of the Muse, which hastened his acceptance of Dalberg's proposition to make him "poet of the

theatre" (Theaterdichter), with an annual salary of three hundred florins. He engaged to write at least three dramas a year, and gave the Mannheim stage the right to bring them out, reserving for himself the copyright on the printed editions.

Schiller's second sojourn in Mannheim proved a most unfortunate one. But a short time after his arrival he had a severe attack of malarial fever, which he succeeded in keeping at bay only by consuming an incredible amount of quinine. The summer of 1783 was unusually hot and oppressive, and the rates of mortality in the city indicated a veritable malarial epidemic. Schiller worked incessantly, because he could not afford to be ill; but the consequences of this reckless neglect of all laws of health were felt throughout the rest of his life, which was henceforth a perpetual struggle with disease. The "civic," or perhaps rather "bourgeois," tragedy, "Louise Millerin," which the actor Iffland named "Love and Intrigue," was now completed and had the good fortune to gain the approval of the distinguished Dalberg. The mutilated edition of "Fiesco" was also put upon the boards, but failed to arouse the enthusiasm of the Mannheim public, while "Love and Intrigue," in spite of the more or less qualified condemnation of literary critics, was from the beginning a pronounced success; and it speaks well for the vitality of Schiller's genius that both these youthful plays, not to mention his later dramatic masterpieces, have been able to keep their places upon the stage and in the hearts of the people even to the

present day. "Love and Intrigue" deals with a problem which has been a favorite one with the dramatists and romancers of all times, viz., the problem of caste. Where the hearts are drawn together and the difference in social position divides the lovers, there are but two alternatives possible: either the party who has the advantage in point of birth must be sufficiently heroic to ignore his conventional superiority and conquer the difficulties which it places in his way, or renunciation, separation, and death will be the requisite *dénouement*. A dishonorable union, to be sure, lies within the pale of possibility, but this alternative is excluded by the high and virtuous character of the lovers in Schiller's tragedy. Ferdinand, the nobleman, and Louise, the poor musician's daughter, therefore die, and their death is intended by the author as a protest against the unjust and artificial order of society which furnishes the upper classes with facilities for preying upon the lower, without providing the latter with the necessary weapons for self-defence.

"Love and Intrigue" is dramatically a great advance upon its predecessors. The characterization of the old musician Miller and his daughter is as good as anything Schiller has produced in the same line. But he knows low life far better than high life. In dealing with the former he shows observation and intimate acquaintance; in dealing with the latter he reproduces the sort of gossip which circulates among the bourgeoisie concerning the dazzling wickedness of the great. There is a burn-

ing wrath in his political satire which sees with intensity, but through a magnifying and distorting lens. Lessing had dealt with the same theme in "Emilia Galotti," but his wicked prince had satirized German conditions under an Italian mask. Schiller was bolder. He calls a spade a spade, and lashes the dissoluteness and fathomless corruption of the small courts with the energy of scorn and hate. It is said that nearly all the characters of "Love and Intrigue" were drawn from originals at the court of Württemberg.

Schiller's position in Mannheim was full of embarrassments and troubles. The literary profession was hardly at that time recognized as a legitimate one, and the court calendar assigned no definite rank in the social scale to a dramatic poet. Dalberg, to be sure, occasionally invited Schiller to dinner, and the bookseller Schwan, who was an important citizen in the town, freely opened his house to him. But when Schiller presumed to aspire to the position of a son-in-law, the prudent bookseller, doubting his ability to earn a livelihood, politely declined to entertain his proposition. It was not, however, until after the poet's departure from Mannheim that he applied for the hand of Margaret Schwan, and it is not positively known whether the question of accepting or refusing him was ever submitted to the lady whom it primarily concerned. Fathers in those days were apt to decide such questions on economic grounds, and quite without reference to their daughters' preferences. Another lady whom Schiller met

in Mannheim, and who soon eclipsed all his former loves, was Charlotte von Kalb, the wife of a Major von Kalb who was garrisoned in the neighboring town of Landau. Frau von Kalb was one of those restless and passionate women who are always hungering for an unattainable happiness. She had been forced to marry a man for whom she had never professed a spark of affection, and when Schiller with his daring ideas and ardent unrest approached her, she recognized in him a kindred soul and allowed him to conjecture the enthusiastic regard which she cherished for him. And this, even before their first separation, ripened into an affection which was freely confessed on the part of both. Nevertheless, Schiller's poverty and his inability to fulfil his contract with Dalberg, who imagined that dramas could be manufactured like clocks, tended to increase his discontent and to make him look about for a possible amelioration of his circumstances. As he knew from hints that Dalberg would not desire the renewal of their contract for another year, he made haste to resign his position as "poet of the theatre," and as a desperate makeshift founded a bi-monthly literary and theatrical journal entitled *The Rhenish Thalia*. It is difficult to believe that he could have been sanguine of success for this enterprise, for although the prospectus promised much, and the first numbers in tone and ability excelled all contemporaries of similar scope and character, it must have been evident to the editor, who had had opportunities for knowing the intellectual condition of his South

German countrymen, that the very excellence and impartiality of his reviews would prove a hindrance to the success of his journal. The public had not yet been educated up to the stage where they could enjoy a refined and unsensational style and keen critical sagacity. Cruder means were required to enlist their interest and approval.

In April, 1785, Schiller left Mannheim. In Darmstadt he read a part of "Don Carlos" to the Duke of Weimar, Karl August, who as Goethe's friend had gained the reputation of a German Mæcenas. His Highness was pleased to praise the drama, and in recognition of the author's ability sent him the following day an honorary title as ducal court counselor. But as such a title would be of no avail pecuniarily, Schiller betook himself to Leipsic, where his friends Körner and Huber and the sisters Dora and Minna Stock gave him a hearty reception. These excellent people had previously made his acquaintance by letter, and Körner had even advanced him money and warmly expressed his admiration of his poetic genius. His subsequent removal to Dresden attracted Schiller also to the Saxon capital, where, as a guest in Körner's house, he completed the tragedy "Don Carlos," besides writing a novelistic fragment, "The Ghost Seer" ("Der Geisterseher"), and several poems full of daring thought and splendid imagery.

"Don Carlos" is the first of Schiller's dramas which is written in blank verse. It deals with the love of Carlos, the son of Philip II. of Spain, for his

young stepmother, Elizabeth of Valois, who had been engaged to him before his father married her. The real hero, however, is not Don Carlos, but his friend, Marquis Posa, who is a personification of all those qualities which Schiller especially respected in himself. His political idealism, his self-sacrificing devotion, his humanitarian spirit, and his cosmopolitanism have all found their noblest expression in this fearless and generous Spaniard. It has frequently been asserted of Schiller that he had the stuff in him not only for a great poet, but also for a great statesman and politician. The character of Posa indicates what kind of a statesman he would have made, and settles also the fact that he would have ended his life in a dungeon. Posas were not tolerated in Germany in those days, nor are they now. The only land in the world where a political career would perhaps have been open to a man of Schiller's calibre is England.

During his residence in Dresden the poet made the acquaintance of a dazzling coquette named Henriette von Arnim, and if we are to interpret literally his verses in the lady's autograph album, he placed his hand and his heart at her disposal. He squandered his money in making her costly presents, neglected his work, and earned the displeasure of his friends. He was acutely conscious of his dependence upon Körner, and their relation, which had been of mutual benefit as long as their confidence in each other had been complete, began to grow oppressive to Schiller, as soon as he sus-

pected that his friend disapproved of his conduct. Moreover, he was so inextricably entangled in Fräulein von Arnim's toils that he saw no possibility of regaining his reason except by avoiding her presence. An invitation from Frau von Kalb, who had recently removed to Weimar, furnished him with a convenient excuse for taking his departure, and no sooner had he arrived in the capital of the little duchy (July, 1787) than his old love again took possession of him. There is thus no argument needed to prove that, with all his stanch qualities of mind and heart, his affections in his early youth were of an extremely volatile kind. Like most poets, he loved easily and forgot easily, and the ardor enkindled by love he expended in song.

The dramatic treatment of a historic subject in "Don Carlos" had aroused Schiller's interest in historical studies. Especially did he feel attracted to the history of nations which had made a heroic struggle for liberty. In his tragedy he had had occasion to introduce incidentally the revolt of the Netherlands against the tyranny of Philip II, and he now returned to this subject and wrote his "History of the Revolt of the Netherlands." This work, although it is now the fashion among German scholars to sneer at it, is undeniably an advance upon all previous historical writing done in Germany. It cannot boast the minute accuracy of details, nor the vast accumulation of original learning which distinguish the histories of Mommsen, Curtius, and von Ranke, but it possesses a vital or-

ganic coherence, and is inspired with an ardent enthusiasm for liberty and human rights which at once make the reader's heart beat sympathetically with that of the author. The faults of the work are a tendency to rhapsody and declamation, and a disposition to hide deficiencies in scholarship under a cloak of sonorous rhetoric. But it taught the Germans for the first time that scholarship and dulness are not identical, or, at all events, that brilliancy of style is not incompatible with learning. For all that, it would not be safe for an historian to take Schiller for his model; for though he does not "draw upon his imagination for his facts," he does occasionally heighten the color and dramatic effect of his narrative in a manner which is more conducive to entertainment than to accuracy. There is a poetic afflatus and a rhetorical flow in his sentences which carry the reader along and make him forget that he is engaged in scholarly toil. On the other hand, it is not to be denied that his poetic divination enables him to penetrate more deeply into the fundamental motives and characters of historic personages than even a Mommsen or a Curtius. The portraits of Philip II, the Duke of Alva, and Count Egmont are possibly more brilliant than true; but they are emphatically alive, and impress themselves indelibly upon the memory.

"The History of the Revolt of the Netherlands," whatever its faults, proves that the novelist's art may, with certain limitations, be profitably employed by the historian—a proposition which, sev-

enty years later, was demonstrated once more by Gustav Freytag in his "Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit."

Schiller had anticipated great pleasure and profit from his association with Goethe, who at the time of his arrival was still absent on his Italian journey. When finally they met in September, 1788, the younger poet was bitterly disappointed at the coolness and the rigid and stately manner of the elder, and abandoned all hope of ever approaching him. The fact was, Goethe looked upon Schiller as the head of the "Storm and Stress," a violent and declamatory school, to which he had himself once belonged, but the influence of which he now regarded as pernicious. He had no antipathy to Schiller as a man, but feared, perhaps, that the kind of emotional debauchery which characterized "The Robbers," and Schiller's early lyrics, might, with the author's personal presence, invade the circles which he was endeavoring to educate up to his own classical standard. In view of this half-acknowledged sentiment on Goethe's part, some of his biographers have asserted that he recommended Schiller's appointment to a professorship of history at the University of Jena, merely because he wished to have him removed from his own neighborhood. However, this is a mere conjecture, and it is sure that Schiller, when he accepted the unprofitable appointment, had no suspicion that he owed it to anything but his own recently-earned reputation as a popular historian. He accordingly removed to Jena and

entered with many misgivings upon his career as an academical teacher. There was no fixed salary attached to the position, and the fees which the professors were authorized to collect from their students amounted in Schiller's case to such a trifling sum that he could not rid himself of the feeling that his time and labor were very poorly invested. The Duke of Weimar, however, perceiving his value to the University, granted him an annual pension of two hundred thalers, or about one hundred and fifty dollars. Before this fortunate event occurred, he had made the acquaintance of Charlotte von Lengefeld, a young lady of noble birth, who lived with her mother and sister on a small estate near the village of Rudolfstadt. Lotte was a charming mixture of common sense and romantic sentiment. She had read much in an innocent and uncritical fashion, and could discourse naïvely on Homer and Æschylus, whom she had studied in German and French translations. She even adopts occasionally in her correspondence with Schiller a jocosely Homeric tone, which is scarcely less delightful to the modern reader than it must have been to her adorer. The book containing those of their letters which have been preserved affords a deeper insight into the character of both than all the collected biographies, and gives, moreover, a vivid picture of life in a country nobleman's family in the last century. It is one of the freshest and most enjoyable biographical documents of the period.

It has been generally supposed that Lotte's elder

sister, Caroline von Lengefeld, who married a nobleman named von Beulwitz, from whom she was later separated, was more than half in love with Schiller, and that Schiller returned her affection with an intellectual admiration which possibly she misinterpreted in accordance with her own wishes. Caroline, in consequence of her matrimonial infelicity, was a restless and discontented woman who always imagined herself misunderstood, and found for the first time in Schiller a man who could recognize the possibilities of her nature. Being herself bound, she favored in every way Schiller's courtship of her sister, whom he married in February, 1790. The new relation into which he had thus entered necessitated an explanation of some kind with Frau von Kalb, who was just contemplating a separation from her husband. Schiller's marriage was therefore a great blow to her, and she refused to listen to his excuses. Their interview was a stormy one, and for several years they never saw each other. But when Frau von Kalb, in the course of time, discovered a new ideal in Jean Paul Richter, she consented to forgive Schiller for his desertion.

While retaining his professorship in Jena Schiller was chiefly engaged upon historical writings and compilations. He wrote a "History of the Thirty Years' War," which appeared first in the "Historical Calendar for Ladies," and excited universal admiration. There were a stateliness and dignity in his style which had the effect of novelty in Germany, where learned tradition required that all serious subjects

should be treated in a dryly pedantic and dogmatical manner. The characterizations of Gustavus Adolphus, and of Wallenstein, too, gave evidence of a rare combination of gifts, showing, as they did, a scholarly refinement joined to a happy psychological divination which revealed the great poet.

Schiller, however, was not in a condition to continue this laborious work, the profit of which was disproportionate to the strength and energy expended. It is said that during his residence in Jena he was occupied fourteen hours daily in writing and lecturing. He was eager to pay off the debts contracted in his youth, and to provide a comfortable home for his young wife; and he refused to consider the circumstance that his physical frame was feeble and had been weakened by a former illness, from which he had never completely recovered. In the winter of 1790-91 he had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, followed by spasms and nervous prostration, and the physicians ordered him to the baths of Carlsbad, whither he repaired during the following summer. Körner offered to defray the expenses of the whole journey, but Schiller, who feared that he would not live long enough to repay all that he already owed his friend, refused to consider the proposition. When, however, the Duke of Augustenborg and the Danish Count Schimmelmann offered him an annual pension of one thousand thalers for three years, he was moved by regard for his family to accept with gratitude. He could thus, in the midst of all his sufferings, labor with comparative

cheerfulness, and devote his maturest judgment and creative strength to the composition of the great tragedy upon which he would be content to rest his fame. But while "Wallenstein" was yet in an embryonic condition, several journalistic enterprises engaged Schiller's attention, and one of them, "Die Horen" (The Horæ, The Hours), had the important effect of bringing him into closer contact with Goethe. When issuing the prospectus of the new periodical, Schiller addressed a business letter to his rival in Weimar, requesting permission to include his name among his contributors. Goethe sent a somewhat stiff but yet favorable response; and thus the ice was broken, and the two great men began to discover each other's worth. Within a year they were on visiting terms, and the relation thus happily commenced soon ripened into a generous and devoted friendship. In the year 1797 they presented in their "Xenien" a common front against their literary enemies, and their satirical epigrams, for which they agreed to bear the joint responsibility, made a great havoc in the camp of their opponents. The classic ideal which Goethe was approaching Schiller had independently discovered, and in his "Gods of Greece," a beautiful elegy on the Greek civilization, had shed a poetic tear on the tombs of "the radiant immortals." In the year 1797, an ambition to write ballads, perfect in form and sentiment, took possession of both, and in generous rivalry each strove to outdo the other. The result of this competition was a series of excellent poems which appeared in

the "Almanac of the Muses," an annual publication which was issued about the beginning of the year under Schiller's editorship. His first periodical, "The Rhenish Thalia," he had abandoned in 1793, "The Horæ" struggled through four years of precarious existence, and "The Almanac of the Muses," although full of ability, could not protract its lease of life beyond the year 1800; while a chatty and easy-going journal like Wieland's "German Mercury," whose cheerful mediocrity appealed to the average uncultured public, enjoyed prosperity. Schiller, however, refused to be discouraged by the slight success of his enterprises, but congratulated himself, when the last number of the "Almanac" had gone to press, that henceforth he would at all events have nothing to do with any worse poet than himself. Among the poems, dating from this period, which have become especially and deservedly popular, we might mention "The Cranes of Ibycus," "The Song of the Bell," "The Walk," "The Fight with the Dragon," and "The Diver."

The trilogy of "Wallenstein," consisting of "Wallenstein's Camp," "The Piccolomini," and "Wallenstein's Death," was completed in 1799 and published the following year. It is, if we except the First Part of "Faust," the greatest tragedy written in the German language, even though it may not merit Goethe's encomium: "The work is so great that there exists no equal to it." "Wallenstein's Camp" is a mere prologue which illustrates the fanatical faith of the troops in their leader, and reproduces,

with admirable subtlety, the moral atmosphere of the camp. "The Piccolomini" introduces us to the officers whom Wallenstein, by various means, has succeeded in attaching to his person. Questenberg, the imperial envoy, arrives, and attempts to induce them to desert, or rather to join in a plot against the general in his own camp. The various types of officers are depicted with originality and force. The bluff and vehement Butler, the deceitful and ambitious Terzky, the brave and honorable Max Piccolomini, the time-serving Illo, who is too shrewd to understand a generous motive—all show the master-hand of a great poet. The manner in which Wallenstein's astrological superstition is utilized also betrays a rare subtlety of conception. The stars encourage all his ambitious hopes, and induce him to dally with the thought of treason long before he has taken any definite resolve. And in all probability this resolve would never have been taken if the circumstances, brought about by his fanatical delusion, had not compelled him to carry out a criminal design which he had never fully matured. In his extreme cunning, too, Wallenstein becomes the victim of his own deception. He induces the Emperor's minister to insult Butler in order to attach him the more firmly to himself. But when Butler is informed by Octavio that Wallenstein is the real author of the insult, all his wrath turns against the latter, whom, in the last act of the trilogy, he murders. The vengeance which Wallenstein had aroused, and intended to profit by, thus becomes

his own destroyer. The sub-intrigue with Max Piccolomini and Wallenstein's daughter Thekla, is of minor importance, although it relieves the uncompromising sternness of the tragedy, and invests it with a pathos which adds to its effectiveness on the stage.

Schiller's next drama, "Mary Stuart," was begun in Jena, but was not completed until June, 1800. He had then resigned his professorship and removed to Weimar, where he could devote himself exclusively to his literary profession. The duke, in the meanwhile, had raised his annual pension to four hundred thalers without demanding the continuance of his academical labors. He could now live in constant association with Goethe, who, with every year, grew to value him more highly, and he could devote his best energies to the work which he loved. If his health had not been so miserable, this would have been the happiest period in his life. His wife, who loved him dearly, was also his intellectual companion, and felt an honest pride in his fame and his great achievements. Children were growing up about him, and he plotted their future with all the hopefulness of a fond parent.

"Mary Stuart" deals with the last years of the life of the ill-starred Queen of Scots. Schiller wishes to show the exaltation of noble, though not unmerited, suffering. He appeals wholly to our feelings without troubling himself much about the question whether our reason can approve the verdict of our hearts. Mary admits that she was an accomplice to

the murder of Darnley ; but she is young and beautiful, and she repents sincerely of her past wickedness. But wicked she nevertheless is, or has been ; and her repentance we find it a little difficult to believe in. The Mary whom Schiller depicts would have been incapable of murder ; and the murder, being an admitted fact, is therefore unaccounted for and seems to have no connection with the Queen's character. It is as if some sinister Fate had decreed it, and used the lovely woman as a half-unconscious tool. This is to my mind a serious defect. How much subtler is Swinburne's conception of the character of Mary, with her feline femininity and her exquisite, dangerous beauty ! And the affectionate cajolery, full of sweet sensuous well-being, and the playful tenderness of a leopardess ! There was a masculine simplicity about Schiller which made him incapable of entering into the deeper subtleties of the female nature. He saw and understood large heroic types, but Mary, Queen of Scots, presented a problem which was certainly beyond him.

In order to arouse our sympathy for the heroine in spite of her guilt, it is of course necessary to make her sufferings as acute as possible, and to depict Elizabeth, who inflicts them, in the blackest colors. According to Schiller, jealousy was Elizabeth's chief motive in persecuting her beautiful rival. The welfare of England, and the preservation of the Protestant faith enter but secondarily into her calculations, and petty malice and envy of Mary's physical loveliness appear everywhere as the mainsprings

of her action. It is hardly to be disputed that Schiller has here anticipated the opinions of later historians who are inclined to agree with him in his estimate of the Queen of England. But for all that, it would have been more tragically effective if the welfare of the nation, and the preservation of the faith, rather than the jealousy of a woman, had been made to demand Queen Mary's sacrifice. For it is more dignified to die as the victim of a nation's progress than as that of a woman's hate. On the stage "Mary Stuart" proved a success; and the author's reputation as a dramatist began to spread even to foreign lands, as is proved by the fact that he was offered £60 by a London theatre for every play which he would send to England for representation, before he published it in Germany.

Schiller's next dramatic venture was "The Maid of Orleans," which was published in 1801, with the significant sub-title, "A Romantic Tragedy." It is the well-known story of Joan of Arc, which is here dramatized, with all the attendant marvels and miracles with which tradition has gradually encumbered it. The Maid appears as a semi-supernatural agent by whom the divine will is executed. In taking upon herself the deliverance of France from its enemies, she obeys reluctantly a divine command, and the moment she yields to earthly love, which puts her on a level with other mortals, her faith in her heavenly mission deserts her, she falls into the hands of the English, and is burned at the stake as a witch. Although abounding in passages of great

beauty, and replete with startling scenic effects, "The Maid of Orleans" is undoubtedly the weakest of Schiller's historical tragedies. It has no root in the moral consciousness of the century. The guilt for which the Maid is punished by Heaven is no guilt to us. She is a woman, and she loves. There is no evidence in the text that she falls. If it were particularly emphasized that she is guilty, because she loves an enemy of France, we might be induced to approve, conditionally, of the judgment of Heaven. But this is not the charge; it is merely for being what she is, and recognizing the passions inseparable from her nature that she is made to suffer a cruel and ignominious death. It was the reading of the authors of the so-called "Romantic School," all of whom dealt in miracles and supernatural mysteries, which led Schiller to make this experiment in mediæval wonder-lore. As a spectacular stage piece it has always met with extraordinary success; and however much critics may cavil, the people still persist in liking it.

In "The Bride of Messina," Schiller made a fresh and very daring experiment, not with mediæval superstition, but with the Greek idea of Fate. With great ingenuity he devised a situation in which a paternal curse takes the place of destiny, and two apparently contradictory dreams correspond to the ambiguous oracles. Even the chorus is reintroduced and cries its "woe, woe," as it does in the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles. The whole drama, although its exaltation of language and po-

etic beauty are unsurpassed in German literature, is too remote from modern thought and feeling to appeal to a modern audience. It has, therefore, unlike the other tragedies of Schiller, failed to gain a foothold upon the stage, and is only occasionally revived as a diversion for scholars, and out of respect for the author's memory. Schiller himself expressed in a letter to Körner great delight at the first performance of this classic drama, and Goethe asserted that it had consecrated the German stage for better things to come.

In the autumn of 1802, Schiller received from the Emperor Francis II. a diploma of nobility, which, for the sake of his wife and children, he accepted with the proper acknowledgments. In December, 1803, Madame de Staël arrived in Weimar, and by her excessive volubility put his patience to a severe test. Her brilliancy was, at times, positively oppressive, and when, finally, she left, he wrote to Goethe that he felt as if he had passed through a severe illness. In the spring of 1804 he was invited to visit Berlin, and all his historical tragedies were successively brought upon the stage with a magnificence which exceeded his most daring anticipations. The court and the people delighted to honor him, and negotiations were opened with a view to inducing him to take up his residence in the Prussian capital; but the companionship of Goethe and his familiar circle in Weimar were more precious than the pomp of a royal court. He therefore refused to accept the terms offered by the Prussian minister, if,

indeed, the latter, as has latterly been questioned, embodied his oral promises in a definite proposition.

Three months before his journey to Berlin, Schiller had finished the last drama which he completed, viz., "Wilhelm Tell." In all probability it was Goethe's journey to Switzerland, and his conversation concerning the poetic possibilities of the Tell legend, which aroused Schiller's interest in the Swiss traditions, and prompted him to peruse Tschudi's Swiss Chronicle. It is well known that Goethe himself contemplated writing an epic with Tell for its hero, but that he subsequently abandoned the plan, and recommended the subject to his friend. Although somewhat loosely put together, and without any well-defined focus of interest, "Wilhelm Tell" has always been the popular favorite among Schiller's dramas, and possesses a charm which seems never to fail or grow old. It may be a weakness of construction that Tell's rôle, as the deliverer of his country, is, in a manner, accidental; since, according to his own testimony, he kills Gessler in self-defence, and in order to protect his wife and children from the tyrant's vengeance. It may also be contrary to dramatic canons to have two parallel intrigues without any vital interdependence, but in spite of all such objections the fact remains that the drama has always been greeted with a warm and spontaneous enthusiasm wherever it has been worthily represented. The fragrance of the Alpine meadows, and the breath of the glaciers blow into our faces from the very opening scene, and a long, clear vista

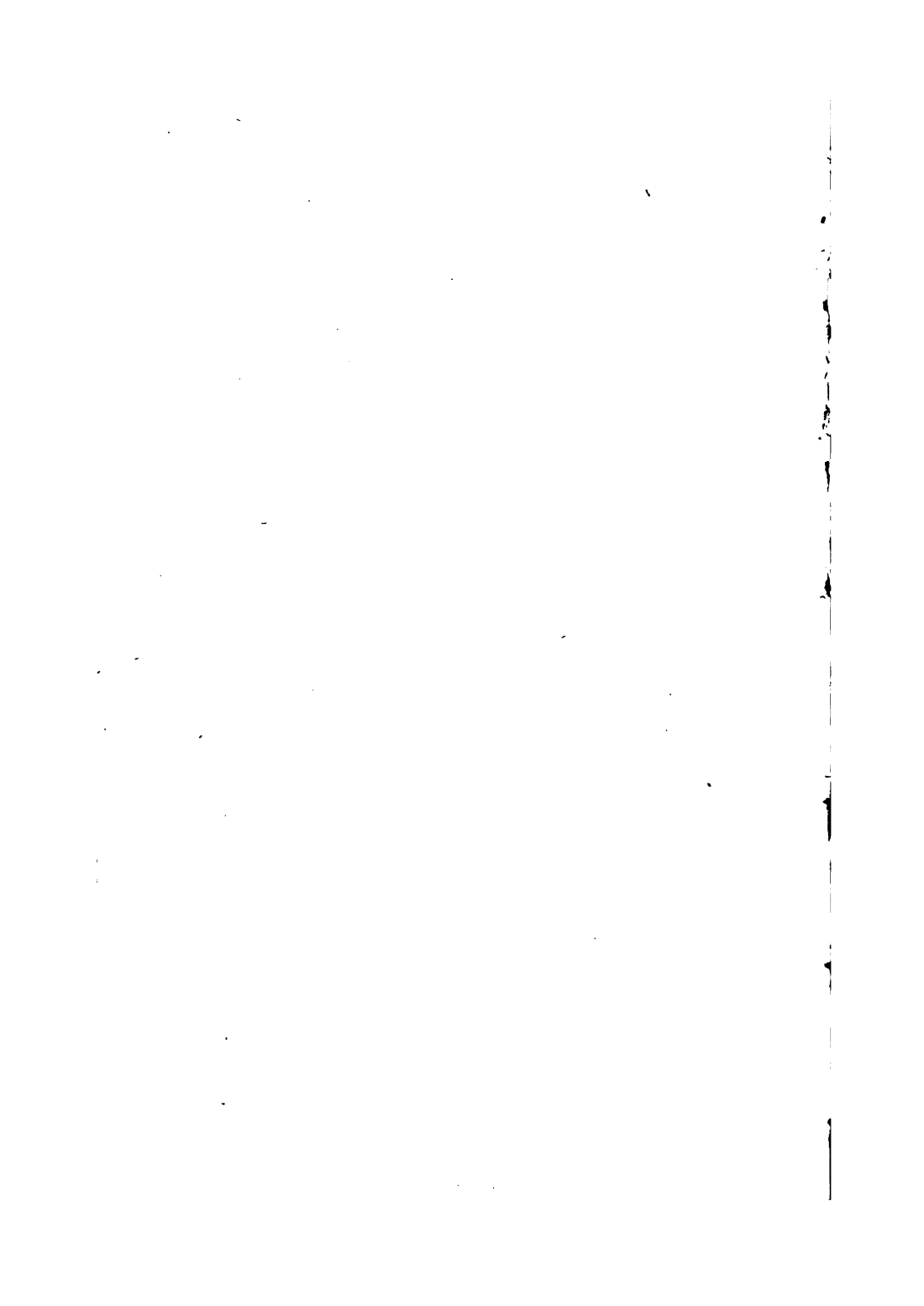
is revealed into the very heart of the beautiful Switzerland. In the presence of such vivid impressions the critic's dissenting voice is left unheeded. It is drowned in the rush and roar of the ice-fed rivers, and in the resounding echoes of the *ranz-des-vaches*.

As Schiller's hold upon existence grew feebler, his interest in his work grew more intense. He labored incessantly, even while tortured by physical sufferings. During the winter of 1804-5, he had several severe attacks of illness which shattered his weak frame. And yet the thought of his next drama, "Demetrius," never left him. Whenever he had a little respite from suffering he immediately resumed his work upon this "child of sorrows." Even after consciousness had left him he raved in his delirium about the Russian pretender, and declaimed scene after scene with excited looks and gestures. Next to his wife and children there was nothing in the world which it grieved him more to abandon than this unfinished master-piece; but perhaps not even this exception ought to be made. May 9, 1805, he expired. His last conscious act was to kiss his wife, and his last words were: "Happy, ever happier."

The significance of his life and work to his country it is difficult to over-estimate. By his fearless protest against tyranny and his worship of liberty he first wakened the noble rebellion which in time will accomplish the enfranchisement of the fatherland from spiritual and political despotism. In the sober idealism of his maturer years he sought a con-

solation, in the world of thought, for what reality could not yield him ; and thus the German finds, at each stage of his development, the fuller utterance in Schiller's life and work for his own unformulated thought and sentiment. Nevertheless, the key-note of his song, which he first struck in his youthful rebellion against tyranny, has resounded with stronger vibrations than his more philosophic strains ; and he returned to it once more in his last completed drama. Therefore the Germans are not wrong in loving and revering him as "the poet of liberty."

THE GERMAN NOVEL



VIII.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE GERMAN NOVEL

DELIGHT in epic narration is not a distinctly Teutonic trait ; it is a human one. Barbaric life, as soon as it reaches a certain stage of development, is sure to have its novelist, whose works perish with the memory of those who hear them. The Icelandic scalds and saga-men of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries were such primitive novelists, and were only more fortunate than generations of their predecessors in having found somebody to save their tales from oblivion. The metrical form was undoubtedly at first merely a mnemonic device—an aid to memory ; and alliteration served the same purpose. The initial word or letter of a lay, when cut into a runic staff, would be likely to suggest the remainder of the line ; and as the weighty word of the second line had to commence with the same letter the mind would be, as it were, borne along by the suggestive force of the sound. The lays or narratives themselves were not songs, in the modern sense, but merely rude recitatives, or a kind of intoned rhythmical speech,

similar to that which may yet be heard among the rhapsodists of Greece.

Tacitus alludes to the existence of such lays among the early Germans, celebrating the deeds of departed kings and ancestors. Thus, in later years, sitting at the festal board, or around their camp-fires, the warriors recited the deeds of Arminius, who delivered them from the yoke of the Romans. The remnants of these primitive songs which Charlemagne with intelligent zeal had collected, were deliberately destroyed by his bigoted son, who hoped to save his paltry soul by exterminating these last vestiges of heathenism. If Iceland, too, had had a sufficiently attractive climate to make it worth while for Italian priests to despoil her, we should probably to-day not have a single complete specimen left of these early pagan lays. But, fortunately, the Icelandic priests were natives, and understood the national value of the sagas; and taking it for granted that the development of the Teutonic spirit in Germany and Scandinavia was in all essentials parallel, we may safely infer that the songs which the priests of Louis the Pious burned greatly resembled the lays preserved to us in the Eddas. That the Niblung and Völsung legends, which form a great part of the Elder Edda, were common to the whole Germanic race we have positive evidence; and it is hardly to be questioned that much of the mythological material must have been preserved, up to the Christian era, by German as well as by Scandinavian tradition. The German

ballads and folk-lore afford conclusive proof that such was the case ; and any one who will take the trouble to compare the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm with those collected by the Norsemen, Asbjørnsen and Moe, may trace the parallel development of mythological types in the two nations. It is more than probable, therefore, that the so-called romantic sagas, the pagan prototypes of the fairy tale, must have existed in Germany as well as in Norway ; and if it had not been for the destructive zeal of Louis the Pious, we should in all probability have been able to point to the Teutonic counterparts of the stories of Oervarodd and Angantyr and his brethren, which occupy the same position and appealed to the same need in ancient life as the works of popular novelists in our life of to-day. In the meanwhile, owing to the anxiety of the aforesaid King for his soul, we have to deplore a missing link in the evolution of the German novel.

Delight in the marvellous is characteristic of children and savages. All crude and undeveloped minds prefer the miraculous to the normal. "They come to see, but they prefer to stare," as Goethe says of the theatrical public. It takes a very considerable culture and an insight, of which but a vanishing minority of mankind is possessed, to appreciate what is really typical of the age or the nation, and what is the normal and logical consequence of a certain line of conduct. If we are to judge men by their actions, they have still only the dimmest perception of the agencies which affect

their lives, and as long as this ignorance exists and is fostered by our educational methods, it is scarcely to be expected that they will take pleasure in seeing that depicted in books which they are unable to recognize in reality. They must know what is normal before they can take delight in it. They must recognize the law before they can distinguish between that which conforms to it and that which does not. Fortunately, the beneficent scientific movement of recent years has revealed and is revealing to a constantly increasing number of men the true logic of existence, and teaching them to order their lives in accordance with certain ascertainable laws which will govern them, either with or without their consent. To such men exciting tales of crime and mystery, dealing with impossible or abnormal incidents, become positively odious, while the sober and refined novel of manners, illustrating typical though often unpleasant phases of existence, gives keen enjoyment. They are apt to prefer Thackeray to Dickens, and perhaps Turgénéff to both. They could not be induced to read a detective story by Gaboriau, however thrilling the plot, and they have at heart more respect even for Zola than for some of his sentimental *confrères*. It may be questioned, perhaps, whether this wholesome change in the public taste is due to the progress of science, and I have not the space here to convince those who are inclined to disagree. The influence of scientific discovery asserts itself, however, in a thousand subtle and widely ramified ways, and

reaches even those who are most aggressive in their hostility to the modern school of thought. The phenomenon nevertheless remains that a notable change is taking place in the opinions of cultivated people all over the world, and their literary tastes naturally keep pace with their growth in other directions. Such changes have, of course, been taking place at all times, and the chief value of literature consists in its preserving a record of these progressive changes, and thus furnishing data for a history of the evolution of the human mind. In Germany this record is, up to the twelfth century, extremely fragmentary, but from the Middle Ages down to the present day the material is abundant.

By a novel in its broadest sense I mean a narrative, either in prose or verse, whose primary object is to entertain ; and in tracing the pedigree of the novel back into savage life I shall merely endeavor to find some corresponding agency, ministering to this same need of entertainment. A community in the militant state is naturally oppressed with a superfluity of leisure ; the warriors, however brave, cannot always be fighting and hunting, and as they disdain to till the field, time must during the greater part of the year often hang heavily upon their hands. In Iceland we know from the sagas that this was the case. The men, when they did not drink or sleep (in both of which luxuries they indulged largely), went about aching for a quarrel, and seizing the most trifling pretext for killing any one who came in their way. They had to find some

outlet for their superabundant energy, and slaying was regarded as a convenient and honorable amusement. But even quarrelling will in time become monotonous; and kings and chiefs, who could not afford to have their men decimated by internecine brawls, had to provide some more harmless way of keeping their faculties occupied. That this was the only reason for attaching one or more scalds to the court of every king, earl, or chieftain, I would not assert; but that it was a very weighty reason is obvious from many passages in the sagas. When the men grew quarrelsome the king called upon the scald to entertain them, and they forgot their wrath. The tales that he told were usually of tremendous feats of strength, terrible battles, and marvels of foreign lands; and it is notable that the oldest sagas (such as the *Völsunga*) are almost one continuous series of miracles. Magic, incantations, transformations into animals, play an important part in them. They touch reality only remotely, and their power to charm depended primarily upon their supernaturalism. Prose is here used, interspersed with occasional songs, and the heroes are often historic personages who are magnified into supernatural proportions. But besides these we have the so-called romantic sagas, which are as frankly fictitious as "Puss in Boots" and "Jack the Giant-Killer." The familiar figure, Boots, or the Ashie-pattle, as he is called in the Norse fairy tale—the despised boy who sits in the ashes and is supposed to be good for nothing—occurs constantly in such

sagas as that of Ketil Höing, Grim Lodinkin, etc., and even though he does not always end by marrying the princess, he never fails to dumfound his contemners by some monstrous feat of strength or daring. Dragons, hidden treasures, wizards, mermaids, and all the well-known figures of the fairy tale abound in these sagas, which, however, in those early times were told for the edification of grown people, and not of children. That the Germans had similar tales, and a class of men similar to the Norse scalds, can scarcely be doubted. Primitive society positively demanded them, and it would have been strange if so urgent a demand should have met with no response. It is not necessary that they should have formed a distinct caste, like Klopstock's and Kretschmann's hypothetical bards; but they may, like the Scandinavian scalds, have been warriors, exceptionally endowed with imagination and the power of speech. A vast deal of nonsense has been written in Germany about "*das dichtende Volk*," and much ingenuity has been wasted in attempts to prove that portions of the Nibelungen Lied have no individual author, but are the direct product of the poetic faculty of the collective people. The Wolfian theory regarding the origin of the Homeric poems has, by Bartch, Lachmann, and others, been applied to the Nibelungen, and the very flattering conclusion has been arrived at that, previous to the twelfth century, when the minnesingers began to flourish, the whole German people, in a half-unconscious and miraculous manner, composed epics, or epic ballads, dealing

with the illustrious deeds of their kings and heroes; and that all that the professional poet had to do, when he appeared upon the scene, was to join these ballads together, polish up the metre here and there, and supply the missing links in the tale by some supplementary verses. Although I cannot subscribe to this theory, it is fair to admit that no one has the historical data at hand either to prove or to disprove it. It has grown out of a certain sentimental regard for "the people" which has become fashionable in Germany during the last thirty years, and in part also from a very pardonable desire to have a national epic of as dignified a pedigree as the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey."

But whether the Germans had scalds or not, before the age of the minnesingers, it is very sure that they must have had some kind of story-tellers who preserved their national traditions. It is not credible to me that the story of the Niblungs and Völsungs should have been brought to them by Scandinavian vikings, and afterward remodelled in accordance with the Christian spirit and the changed geography of its new domicile. If, as I believe, the legend is indigenous, it must have taken various shapes in the hands of various singers, and assumed in some degree the color of every successive age in which it was reproduced. If we take the extant version, which dates from the latter half of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, we can trace in every canto a conscious softening of the crude material, and concessions to the courtly

taste. The story was, in this shape, intended for the entertainment of knights and ladies, and that it must have been very popular is evident from the fact that more than twenty manuscripts have been discovered. It is, then, if we stretch the term a little, a coherent story or novel in verse, or, to be more exact, the thirteenth century's equivalent for the modern novel. It answered the same purpose; it aroused emotions of sympathy, admiration, pleasure; it entertained. As a counterpart of life it was imperfect, but yet a much closer approximation to reality than the tales which held spell-bound the ruder warriors of earlier centuries. The fairy tale, or what corresponded to the romantic saga, gradually found its way into the nursery and the peasants' hall, and the fine ladies who wept with Chriemhild at the death of her lord, would have smiled contemptuously at the crude wonder-tales which had delighted their ancestors. And yet wonders are by no means excluded from the Nibelungen. In fact, the opening verse announces:

"In ancient song and story many a wondrous tale is told;"

but the wonders, though often startling enough, are of a less extravagant character than those which abound in the fairy tale. Thus the story of Brynhild's fabulous strength, previous to her marriage, and Gunther's and Sigfried's exchange of form, are remnants of an older version, and are retained chiefly because they are indispensable to the intelligibility

of the plot. The mythological incidents of the sleeping-thorn and the wall of fire are omitted, as I imagine, in deference to a more enlightened taste which easily wearied of childish marvels. On the other hand, manners, customs, and details of courtly etiquette, which were foreign to the age from which the legend sprang, are continually insisted upon, and described with a minuteness worthy of a modern novelist. It is very evident that this was what, in the poet's opinion, especially appealed to his public, and he, therefore, omits no opportunity for dwelling upon it. Thus the splendor of the tournament, the magnificence of the costumes, the rattle and glitter of precious arms, etc., are depicted with a lingering fondness which is wholly at variance with the spirit of the heroic ballad. In the end, to be sure, the wild tragedy of the original theme asserts itself in unrelieved ferocity, and the courtly poet may be pardoned for forgetting his chivalrous manner in the general carnage with which his tale closes. The effect which single scenes in the *Nibelungen* produce depends in no wise upon felicity of phrase; for the author often expresses himself in the most tediously prolix and lumbering manner; but for all that, one receives impressions from the book which are indelible. It is the beauty of the situations themselves which makes them linger long in the mind, not their treatment by the author, which is always inadequate, often trite and pusillanimous. Thus, the scene where Chriemhild starts for the matin-mass at

daybreak, and finds her husband slain before her door, has a picturesqueness, apart from its sublimity, which makes it loom up among the solitary peaks of memory ; and tremendous in its wild beauty is the scene where Hagen rises at King Etzel's board, and, as an introduction to the carnage that is to follow, shouts : "Now let us drink the toast to the dead, and waste the king's wine !" That there is a departure here from the attempt to describe contemporary manners, is very evident ; but the fact still remains that a conscious effort is made to drape the legend in a contemporary garb, and to make the heroes think, feel, and act like knights and ladies of the minnesinger's age.

In the other popular tales of the period, the same method is followed. The idea of reproducing the color of a bygone age had as yet occurred to no one ; and the minnesingers, like the mediæval painters of Italy, would have had no scruple in dressing the Madonna in the costumes of their wives. In the sacred and classical stories, which were amplified and remodelled for the edification of the mediæval German public, this adaptation of the historical costume to contemporary taste often makes the oddest impression ; as, for instance, in Heinrich von Veld-cke's "Eneide," where the wife of King Latinus is made to converse in the following manner with her daughter Lavinia about the nature of love :

"Mother. If you wish to live happily and well, daughter, then love Turnus.

"Daughter. Wherewith shall I love him ?

"*Mother.* With your heart and with your senses.

"*Daughter.* Shall I give him my heart?

"*Mother.* Yes ; to be sure.

"*Daughter.* How, then, can I live?

"*Mother.* Not in that way shall you give it to him.

"*Daughter.* How could I turn my mind to a man?

"*Mother.* Love will teach it you.

"*Daughter.* Mother, by God, what is love?

"*Mother.* Daughter, it is from the beginning of time powerful over the whole world, and shall ever remain so, even unto the day of doom ; but in order that no one shall in any wise be able to resist it, love is so made that one can neither hear nor see it," etc.

There is, of course, no pretence here of fidelity to Latin character—a very difficult thing, by the way, as next to nothing is known concerning the peoples that inhabited Latium previous to the founding of Rome. But even if every nook and cranny of the pre-Roman history of Italy had been explored, I doubt if Heinrich von Veldeke would have availed himself of these sources of knowledge. The age, though knowing and self-conscious when compared to the age of the Niblungs and Völsungs, was yet *naïve* in its acceptance of whatever pleased, and it saw no incongruity in transferring the perennial type of the *ingénue* into the age of Moses or that of Eneas,

without change of speech or costume. This frank acceptance of one's self and one's own experience as typical for all times and races is a healthy sign, however, and characteristic of active, vigorous natures who have no time to expend in psychological investigation. Especially during the Middle Ages, when so little historical knowledge had been accumulated, and only misty legends floated about, constantly changing form and yet finding credence, a premature effort at historical correctness could only have revealed its own impotence. That is only sound literature which has its root in life, and it can represent only that life which it knows; not that which its authors have never seen. The mediæval epics are therefore only the more valuable, because of their reliance upon living models. When professing to give information concerning the Madonna, or Dido, or Alexander, they give glimpses of contemporary life and thought which are no less precious because, in their relation to Hebrew or classical antiquity, they are amusingly mendacious. Even the semi-religious epics, such as Wolfram von Eschenbach's "*Parsifal*," where a mystic symbolism prevails, and endless miracles entangle the plot, derive their chief interest from the revelation which they afford regarding the mediæval temper and the state of mind to which such obscure and labored allegories could appear at all edifying. For literature is the biography of humanity, and only where it is autobiographic is it absolutely authentic.

The first book which appeared in Germany to

which the title of romance was given, was the once famous tale "Amadis;" and romance (*Roman*) is, as everyone knows, the German equivalent for the English "novel." Originally the name was given merely to indicate that the book was translated from a Latin tongue, or in this case from two, as the French version proved to be a translation from a Spanish original by Vasco le Sobeira. The *lingua romana* was the common Roman vernacular from which Italian, French, and Spanish have sprung, in contradistinction to the *lingua latina*—the classical Latin. The German word *wälsch* is used as a collective term for these languages, and *wälsche Mähr*e was formerly a common term for a fantastic, extravagant tale. But the word *Roman* (*romant*) soon came to be applied even to indigenous tales which described love and chivalrous adventure in a high-flown and exaggerated style; and in the course of a century, as the memory of "Amadis" was obliterated, *Roman* became the generic term for all prose fiction. So great was the fascination which this book exerted upon the German public, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that not only were editions constantly multiplied, but the story itself was amplified and enlarged from the original twelve books, first to twenty-four, and at last to thirty. Amadis's children and his grandchildren invaded the story, and as the family of the knight and his virtuous Oriana ramified, the opportunities for tracing the adventures of successive generations became, of course, unlimited. It is, indeed, hard to imagine how

people were constituted who could find pleasure in the turgid style and unwholesome amorousness of this book, and it gives a measure of our intellectual remoteness even from those whose culture was most advanced, two hundred years ago ; for it was the so-called higher classes who gloated over the unsavory twaddle of this "model of chivalrous virtue," and who were edified by his encounters with giants, wizards, and other dangerous characters. It is well to take into account, however, the dreary and eventless life of the German country nobility, whose ladies, in their enforced quiet, have always been large consumers of unwholesome fiction. Where for weeks and weeks nothing of interest is apt to happen, a book, whether it be good or bad, is a welcome guest ; and one may well pardon the avidity with which the soul-hungry country ladies of two centuries ago devoured immoral romances, and forgot to blush at indelicacies which in speech they might have resented.

In the train of "Amadis" followed a long series of so-called "Amadis Romances," which were but variations of the same theme of solemn chivalry and over-conscious virtue. Marvels yet abound, and, what is worse, they are utterly absurd and arbitrary marvels, invented merely because they were in demand. Passing over a long and dreary waste of semi-biblical and semi-classical wonder-stories, we come at last to a work of definite literary value. In fact, Grimmelshausen's "*Der Abenteurliche Simplicius Simplicissimus*," is not only the first German

novel of real merit, but it will always remain a historical document of the utmost importance. It is, however, in the strictest sense, scarcely a novel, but a thinly disguised autobiography, in which the author relates, with as much fidelity to fact as the pretence of fiction permitted, his own adventures in the Thirty Years' War. In a perfectly easy-going manner, and without any attempt at construction, Grimmelshausen initiates his readers into the life of the peasantry, the life of the camp, and the reckless and desperate spirit of the wandering hordes whom the war had driven from peaceful occupations into vagabondism and crime. All these sketches, in spite of the artlessness of the author's style, have a racy vigor and an uncompromising naturalism which bespeak the eye-witness, not the romancer. As a romance, the book would be a well-nigh unaccountable phenomenon in the seventeenth century, while as a personal history its isolation from preceding and succeeding literary movements is easily explainable. The so-called "Robinsonades," on the other hand, which followed with an interval of about fifty years (1720) in the wake of "*Simplicissimus*," are more distinctly in accord with the intellectual temper of the age. Their esthetic worth is *nil*, but as links in the chain of intellectual development they are not without interest. Rebellion against the traditional organization of society, and enthusiasm for an imaginary state of Nature, were already finding their way from France into Germany; and Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe," though scarcely meant as a revolutionary mani-

festó, was accepted as a protest against conventional reality, and as such prepared the way for Rousseau's more direct and daring arraignment of civilization. The delight and wonder which the book excited in the Fatherland can now scarcely be conceived. In the course of thirty years more than forty imitations appeared and found hosts of admiring readers. The absurd titles did not discourage anyone. Thus we have the "German Robinson," the "Italian Robinson," the "Clerical Robinson," the "Medical Robinson," the "Moral Robinson," nay, even the "Invisible Robinson," the "Bohemian Female Robinson," the "European Robinsonetta," "Miss Robinson, or the Artful Maid," and "Robunse and her Daughter Robinschen." Besides these we have a countless multitude of so-called *Aventuriers* or Books of Adventure, many of which celebrated more or less fervidly the superior advantages of desert islands over effete civilizations, and made little boys plan midnight flights to the happy land of the cannibals. These books, which have many points of resemblance to our dime novels, remained in vogue for nearly a century, and two or three of them retain their hold upon the population of servant-maids and journey-men mechanics up to the present time. They usually give a comprehensive outline of the plot on the title-pages as a bait to reluctant purchasers. Although there is no lack of marvels, and at times of the crudest kind, there is yet a tendency perceptible to confine the incidents within the bounds of the possible. The tale, after all, depends no longer

upon the supernatural for its attractiveness ; on the contrary, it recognizes, in a general way, the laws of Nature, and though stretching them to their utmost limits, is rather ostentatious in its pretended conformity to them. Slight as this transition may seem, it yet indicates an important change in the attitude of the public. The *naïve* credulity of former times had given way to a vaguely critical mood, which accepted as interesting only that which seemed within the range of possibility.

The sentimental novel, which, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, gradually displaced the novel of adventure, was, with all its absurdities, an advance upon its predecessor. Gellert's "Life of the Swedish Countess G.," was the first swallow of sentiment which heralded the swarm that was to follow ; but it was Goethe who, in his "Sorrows of Werther" (1774), revealed to the German public the luxury of self-pity and the charm of morbid self-analysis. All Germany wept, and found pleasure in weeping. Some men went to the length of killing themselves in imitation of Werther. Each little man or woman exaggerated his or her little feelings into colossal proportions, took careful note of all his or her exquisite sentiments, which were then written out in diaries and passed around for the edification of friends. It was marvellous what a crop of exquisite sentiments the Werther period produced. Later ages have nothing to show in comparison with it ; and yet if we were all to keep watch of our fine feelings and record them for the benefit of the public,

what beautiful things we might manage to feel on proper provocation! Nevertheless, it was not "Werther" which raised this storm of hysterical sentiment. The sentiment was there before, though in a latent and half-unconscious state; and Goethe was merely the first to give a poetic expression to a universal state of mind. Who has not been impressed, when reading memoirs and correspondence from the eighteenth century, with the emotional extravagance which seems to have pervaded the relations of men and women in those days? Every feeling is magnified, and its expression heightened, until it borders upon the absurd. Where a man of to-day would tell his friend that he had missed him, a German of the eighteenth century would assure him that his heart had yearned for him, that his soul had been athirst for the sound of his voice. That is, in general, the tone of Schiller's youthful correspondence with Körner and Frau von Wolzogen, and Goethe's epistles from the Werther period (particularly those to Jacobi), are no less hyperbolic. "Werther" is, therefore, in no wise the expression of an isolated mood; it is a diagnosis of the malady of the age. The book is, in the noblest sense, realistic. The incidents are poetic, yet normal, the characters are typical and psychologically true, and not the remotest concession is made to the crude taste for excitement and marvels. Its literary quality is admirable. Nevertheless, Goethe would have been the first to admit that, in other respects, it leaves much room for further achievement.

"*Werther*" is a simple tale—hardly reaches the dimensions of what we call a novel; and Goethe may have felt that the fame which he reaped from it was all out of proportion to the effort its composition had cost him. At all events, he made in his next novel, "*Wilhelm Meister*," an attempt to represent a larger section of life, to strike the key-note of the intellectual movement of the century. Instead of one slender thread of narrative, he has here half a dozen intertangled intrigues, each of which tends to enlarge the picture of life in all its checkered heterogeneity.

Evolution, according to one of the several definitions presented by Herbert Spencer, is a development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, and if the novel is to keep pace with life, it must necessarily be subject to the same development; it must, in its highest form, convey an impression of the whole complex machinery of the modern state and society, and, by implication at least, make clear the influences and surroundings which fashioned the hero's character and thus determined his career. To explain all these things in explicit language would, of course, require an encyclopædia, but there are yet other ways of making them present to the reader's consciousness. Thus in Thackeray's "*The Newcombes*," "*Pendennis*," and "*Vanity Fair*," we seem to hear the rush and roar of the huge city in which the scene is laid. The vigorous blood of the nineteenth century throbs and pulsates through every scene and chapter, and we have a subcon-

sciousness of the noisy metropolitan life even in the quietest domestic episodes. It is this vivid presence of the spirit of the age which imparts to Goethe's as to Thackeray's novels a perennial, I might say an historical, value. Especially does "*Wilhelm Meister*" occupy a position as a *culturgeschichtlicher Roman*, unapproached by any other work of German literature. The central theme is self-development, a Quixotic pilgrimage in search of culture. Wilhelm begins by recognizing no obligations except those of his own choosing, but passes through a long discipline which teaches him that happiness is to be found not in rebellion against, but in submission to, the established order of the world. The fantastic individualism which characterized the century is tamed and curbed in this representative hero, until it resumes, of its own accord, all the burdensome duties which are supposed to hinder the free development and retard the daring flight of the soul. That this is a wholesome doctrine no one will dispute. It is the ever-recurring theme of George Eliot's novels; and Freytag and Auerbach have treated it incidentally in "*Debit and Credit*," and "*On the Heights*." The short cut to happiness is always the longest road; emancipation from duty leads to slavery, not to freedom. By submission to the cosmic laws of order, however, Goethe did not necessarily mean an uncritical acceptance of reality as it is. Conservative as he was by temperament, and personally disinclined to agitation, he was yet too clear-sighted not to perceive the tendency of

the century. That the old feudal civilization was gradually breaking up, and giving way to a new industrial civilization in which every man's worth should be in accordance with his usefulness was, perhaps, the cardinal proposition which he wished to demonstrate in "*Wilhelm Meister*." Hence Wilhelm, instead of remaining an actor, or becoming a noble idler, as his early inclination would have led him to desire, takes up deliberately the yoke of duty which he had flung away, and settles down to humdrum domestic life and usefulness as a country physician. "What a lame and disappointing ending!" exclaims the romantic young lady who has read the book because she has seen it hinted in her "*Handbook of Universal Literature*" that Goethe was a great, though somewhat immoral writer. True, from the romantic point of view, the novel offers few attractions, except, perhaps, the story of Mignon and the Harper, and the fascinating improprieties of the pretty actress, Philine. But, philosophically, it will always remain a work of significance, even though the unpardonably chaotic arrangement of the second part ("*Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*") and the many puzzling allegories which every now and then interrupt the progress of the tale, often try the reader's patience and spoil his pleasure. In spite of these glaring faults, however, the book became the prototype in conformity to which a great number of German novels during the first half of the present century were more or less consciously modelled. Even as late as 1860 we

recognize in Oswald Stein, the hero of Spielhagen's novel, "Problematic Characters," the features of Wilhelm Meister modified by the experiences of more than half a century. In fact, the hero who rebels has always been popular in Germany, possibly because Germany, with its musty police atmosphere and its all-devouring army, affords a large variety of occasions for legitimate rebellion.

Among those who had a special grievance against reality, the members of the so-called Romantic School were the most persistent and vociferous. They were, however, far from accepting Goethe's solution of the problem which puts the fantastic hero in the wrong and treats his quarrel with reality as the result of youthful arrogance and an undisciplined fancy. To the romanticist the endeavor to escape from the prosaic routine of life seemed highly commendable, and the peripatetic hero who strolls about the world, in imitation of Wilhelm Meister, in search of culture and refined enjoyments, is usually rewarded by finding a shadow, at least, of what he seeks. The eudæmonist who consciously pursues happiness as an aim is always reprobated by Goethe and finds the object of his quest, if at all, only after he has abandoned his search for it. With the romanticists, on the other hand, literature was so largely a mere play of unfettered imagination that fidelity to fact and the logical sequence of cause and effect seemed a matter of small consequence. Thus in Novalis's "The Disciples of Sais," which was intended as a protest against the sordid

philosophy of "Wilhelm Meister," we move in the upper spheres of allegorical mysteries where miracles are every-day affairs and where reality is only perceived as a distant hum, far down in the depth below. Franz, in "Sternbald's Wanderings," by Ludwig Tieck, is another æsthetic hero of the romantic variety, who roams about in the "moon-illuminated magic night," sings songs on very slight provocation, indulges in hot, confidential heart-effusions with every man he chances to meet, and altogether has the queerest and most unforeseen things happen to him. It takes very little to make this style of hero rapturous; only his raptures are as unreal as he is himself. When imagination soars so high above the solid ground of fact, there is no longer any limit to its excesses; everything becomes arbitrary and as such devoid of interest.

Among the many novels which, with occasional reminiscences of "Wilhelm Meister," reflect certain typical conditions of mind during the first half of the present century, Gutzkow's "Ritter vom Geist" occupies a prominent place. The Knights of the Spirit are a secret brotherhood, reminding one of the curious freemasonry of culture, in which Wilhelm Meister derived so much benefit from hobnobbing with noblemen. These knights have a suspicion that somewhere in the universe, and particularly in Germany, something or other is wrong, and that it is their mission in some way or other to set it right. For this purpose they unite in a secret order, the members of which style themselves be-

lievers in the progressive development of humanity, independently of religion, morality, and the state. That such a confused proposition could seriously be advocated by an author of Gutzkow's reputation is in itself sufficiently startling, and that a large number of people could be induced to peruse with edification the nine volumes in which this vast and misty scheme is made still mistier, bespeaks even greater heroism in the German mind than had been suspected. To account for this strange phenomenon, one must bear in mind that the *illuminati* craze had taken possession of the age; and the expectation to accomplish the amelioration of the lot of man through the agency of secret orders devoted to schemes of mysterious benevolence, pervaded all the upper ranks of society. Hence, the enormous extension of Freemasonry during this period, and the influence of brazen impostors like Cagliostro, who did not scruple to take advantage of the universal credulity. Nevertheless, the so-called "Young-German" movement, in which Gutzkow took a conspicuous part, had other excuses for being than that of sharing in many of the Utopian delusions of the age. It was as the spokesmen of the opposition to the political and religious reaction which swept over Germany after the downfall of Napoleon that the Young-German authors gained public favor; and in this capacity there can be no doubt that they accomplished much good. The German people are too prone to acquiesce in what seems inevitable; and political dissenters, however

fantastic and wrong-headed, are, in Germany, never without value. The Young-Germans were reckless iconoclasts, but in arousing opposition to the perfidious policy of the Holy Alliance, they did an excellent work. Even though in the novel they produced no masterpiece, they certainly have, in their own confused idealism, portrayed the confused idealism of the time; and in the lofty phrase-making of their heroes and their impotence in action, they have faithfully reflected a spirit, the proper apprehension of which will supply the key to an age during which an insolent mediocrity like Metternich was the representative man in Europe.

The later developments of the German novel will be the subject of a separate article. Freytag and Spielhagen have taken up the problem of "Wilhelm Meister" in an interesting series of novels, and have carried the conflict between feudalism and industrialism down to a more recent date. They have eliminated to a great extent the fantastic element which enters so largely into every work of the eighteenth century, and have planted the novel more securely in the soil of every-day reality. The philosophical spirit is still predominant in the works of Berthold Auerbach, whose "Black Forest Village Tales" and "On the Heights" have gained a well-deserved popularity for their author on both sides of the Atlantic. More uncompromisingly realistic are the novels of Fritz Reuter, whose skilful blending of humor and pathos is scarcely surpassed by any contemporary writer. Of all German authors he

has broken most completely with the romantic tradition, and his "Onkel Bräsig" and the whole splendid gallery of Stavenhagen portraits represent, perhaps, in the direction of realism, the latest results of the evolution of Teutonic fiction.

If I were to sum up in a single paragraph the development of the German novel, I should say that it commenced with the miraculous, progressed to the possible, thence to the probable and the normal ; though I am forced to admit that this evolution is, as yet, by no means completed.

The novelist of the seventeenth century asked himself, in regard to the incidents of his plot : " Could they have happened ? " The novelist of to-day puts the question : " Are they likely to happen ? " The novelist of the future will not be satisfied unless he can prove to himself that, his premises given, nothing else could have happened. The German novelists, however, have not yet caught up with this modern movement ; they linger yet on the borderland of the sensational.

IX.

STUDIES OF THE GERMAN NOVEL

GOETHE'S "Wilhelm Meister," though it properly belongs to the eighteenth century, struck the key-note of a theme which the novelists of modern Germany have ever since been content to vary. Gutzkow, Freytag, Spielhagen, and more indirectly Fritz Reuter and Auerbach, have all offered their expositions (I would not say solutions) of this vital problem, viz., the conflict between the feudalism of the past and the industrial spirit of the present. As feudalism is more powerfully intrenched in Germany than in any other European country, and the conflict accordingly assumes an acuter form, it is natural enough that the novelists should fight the battle of the age with such weapons and powers as they have at their command. But, even apart from this consideration, it is not to be denied that problems of this order possess a peculiar attraction to the national mind. The movement of history, the conflict of social forces, which year by year imperceptibly modify the character and the relations of men—these are the things which to the German novelist appear most worthy of his attention. A merely piquant intrigue, affording no

chances for historic outlook or illustration of social problems, he relegates to what he calls "*die Novelle*," i.e., the short story. Take any one of the eminent German novelists—Spielhagen, Freytag, Auerbach—and this predilection for large problems is everywhere manifest. A pronounced philosophical bias is perceptible in every one of them, and it would be an easy thing to reconstruct each one's philosophy of life from his writings. This is, to be sure, to a certain extent possible in the case of every author of mature convictions, unless he happens to be as severely objective as Tourguéneff or Prosper Mérimée, whose opinions, though scarcely to be inferred from his writings, have nevertheless leaked out through his correspondence. I think, however, that it is capable of demonstration that a German author rarely rests satisfied until he has equipped himself with a "philosophy"—until he has acquired definite convictions concerning a thousand things which a Frenchman or an Englishman is willing to leave to the decision of those whom they may concern. A certain irrepressible tendency toward philosophical generalization is therefore perceptible in the great majority of German novels, especially those of the Young-German period. Among the moderns, Auerbach is especially brimming over with convictions, and frequently, as in "The Villa on the Rhine," forgets that he has a story to tell, flings away his mask and preaches Spinozism *in propria persona*. Spielhagen possesses much more artistic self-restraint, and his social philosophy is only to be

inferred from the general drift of his plots, and an occasional little panegyric which he pronounces upon the remains of his democratic heroes who have sacrificed their lives upon the barricades. And yet I know of no English novelist except George Eliot whose views upon any vital question I could with equal certainty infer.

This philosophic attitude toward the century is one of the chief characteristics of Gustav Freytag's famous novel, "Debit and Credit." The author possesses a profound comprehension of the industrial revolution of the century, and a beautiful consistency of sentiment pervades all his later writings. And this consistency is the result, not of impulse or of hereditary bias, but of mature culture and laborious thought. There is something admirable, too, in the ruthlessness with which he carries out the philosophical purpose in every detail of his work, enforcing his moral, not in preaching, but in the inexorable sequence and logic of his fictitious events. There can be no doubt that the old feudal civilization, with its patriarchal relations, its pomp and circumstance, was a far more picturesque affair than the barren and colorless industrialism which is now driving the nobleman from his inherited acres and giving the merchant the weightiest vote in the councils of state. Thus Baron Rothsattel, in "Debit and Credit," is a much more vivid and interesting personage than his unconscious opponent, Mr. T. O. Schröter, the wholesale grocer, whose sober industry and minute adaptation of means to ends make

him the predestined survivor in the social struggle. The author is perfectly well aware that the Baron would conduct himself in most relations of life with the greater dignity, and be altogether a more agreeable companion than the merchant; but he is equally well aware that Fate has small regard for picturesque advantages, and that the struggle for existence is not decided by sentimental considerations. He has, indeed, a lurking predilection for the nobleman, and it goes, no doubt, hard with him to sacrifice him; but the more praise he deserves for adhering so rigidly to his purpose, and completing his picture with such exclusive regard for the logic of reality.

"The German novel," says the literary historian, Julian Schmidt, "must seek the German people, where alone it is to be found, viz., at its labor." This proposition, which Freytag has quoted with approbation, expresses another important change which the German novel has undergone during the present generation. We all know that labor is apt to be dry, and has neither the piquant nor the picturesque qualities upon which a novel relies for its interest. It is only when a man has leisure that he can go in search of gallant adventures, or surrender himself to emotions which may arouse the sympathy of tender readers. The novelists have therefore always shown a preference for the rich man, whether he be a *parvenu* or of noble birth, and the toilers have, as a rule, been assigned inferior rôles, figuring as rascals or comic characters, or as mere "*supers*."

The business of life, as the majority of novelists represent it, is enjoyment, excitement, or at best self-development. In "Wilhelm Meister" it was the latter, but it was to be acquired by association with men of wealth and station who were free from the narrow prejudices of the toiling Philistine world. In order to enable his hero to enjoy this advantage, Goethe makes him spend his time in directing the amusements of a company of noble idlers, and it hardly seems to have occurred to him what an undignified occupation this was for a young gentleman with ideal aspirations and in search of "harmonious culture." Goethe, with all his clear-sightedness in the abstract, was too deeply imbued with respect for the nobility to perceive that there was anything anomalous in this instinctive subordination of the citizen to the nobleman. Very likely he had his reasons for thinking so, and in a certain way he was right. In the feudal organization of the state, and while society is yet semi-militant, the nobleman fulfils an important function and is entitled to a corresponding respect; but, as society emerges from the state of militancy, the function which he performs will be less and less needed, and the only salvation for the representatives of feudalism in the modern state is, therefore, to abandon their claims to superiority and engage in industrial pursuits. It is this very thing which Rothsattel attempts to do in "Debit and Credit," but, as he has had no training for business, and moreover possesses no criterion for the judgment of men except their deference to himself,

he is cheated on all sides and precipitates his ruin by the very means by which he had hoped to re-establish his position in the state. He cannot condescend, like that unpicturesque toiler, T. O. Schröter, to investigate his own ledgers and see that the accounts tally; nor can he bear to give his confidence to an upright and honest man with a fair degree of self-respect. It wounds his pride to have a citizen behave frankly and independently in his presence, and in order to save this inherited pride he turns from the honest and self-respecting merchant to an obsequious Jew, who fleeces him with the deepest of bows and chuckles to himself, while he draws his toils about him.

According to Freytag, it is labor which in the end gives a man the upper hand in the struggle for existence; and it is interesting to note how he has succeeded in investing the various mercantile transactions of the house of T. O. Schröter and the establishment of Rothsattel's factory with a human interest. The fates of the characters for whom we feel so lively a sympathy are so intimately interwoven with these transactions that it is impossible not to follow them with anxious suspense. Even the young nobleman Fink, who has imbibed a fair share of the military traditions of his ancestors, sees himself forced to enter the office of the wholesale grocer, and, gradually conquering his somewhat volatile nature, adapts himself to the changed requirements of the age. He has been in the United States, where he has had occasion to rid himself of many of

his noble prejudices and has learned the art to help himself. This man, *e.g.* the man of birth and brains and devoid of prejudice, is, according to our author, the heir of the future. He is, at all events, the successor in the industrial state to the defunct nobleman of the past. This is, in fact, the solution of the problem presented by nearly all the German novelists who have dealt with it. The *homo novus*—the pure plebeian—they are unable to stomach. And yet whoever reads the signs of the times aright will risk the prophecy that the man without ancestors will probably secure the lion's share in the heritage of the future.

In his endeavor to depict the German people at its labor, Freytag has not confined himself to mercantile toil. Besides commerce, a large portion of the German nation is also devoted to scholarly labor. This is a branch of labor in which the Germans have reached the highest excellence ; and a novelist who, like Freytag, is familiar with all its joys and trials could scarcely fail to extract from it a great amount of entertainment. The novel "The Lost Manuscript," which deals with the search of Professor Werner for the lost books of Tacitus, is, to my mind, one of the most delightful books in the German language. The adorable Ilse whom the Professor finds instead of the lost Tacitus is the historic German maiden, a modern Thusnelda in the bud, in whom repose in half-slumber all the heroic possibilities of the German mind. Modern civilized life, to be sure, rarely calls for the kind of heroism that

the Teutonic woman exhibited at the battle of Aix, but in the emergencies which arise in Ilse's life, of which some, indeed, are of a mediæval character, she shows herself a worthy daughter of those ancestresses whom Tacitus glorified in his "Germania." Vividly depicted is also the Professor's deepening absorption in his search which leads him to neglect his young wife and fail to perceive the dishonorable designs of the prince in whom Ilse's beauty has enkindled a baleful passion. Of scarcely less interest to the scholar, though perhaps a little tedious to the general reader, is the description of the various parasitical growths which flourish upon the vigorous trunk of the German tree of knowledge; particularly Magister Knix, the forger of ancient manuscripts, who comes within a hair of wrecking a noble reputation. All these complications, dealing with the inner struggles and the outer vicissitudes of an existence devoted to scholarly investigation, form in their *ensemble* a picture of German university life which no later chronicler has so far rivaled.

The long series, "The Ancestors" ("Die Ahnen"), which Freytag has not yet completed, undertakes to trace the historic physiognomy of the German people in its gradual transformations from the earliest period down to the present time. He selects for this purpose one typically German family, which he follows from generation to generation, noting the changes of customs, manners, and sentiments in each successive age.

The action in "Ingo and Ingraban" plays in that legendary twilight which precedes the dawn of authentic history and centres in two distinct tales, the second of which deals with the conversion of the Germans to Christianity. There is something a trifle labored in the style, and a kind of learned conscientiousness which restrains the free movement of the plot and interferes with the reader's pleasure. The same is true, though in a lesser degree, of "The Nest of the Wrens," which describes entertainingly the extravagant woman worship and other affectations of the Minnesingers. "The Brothers of the German House" contains a vivid study of the period of the Hohenstaufens (1226) and the social conditions prevailing at the time of the Crusades. "Markus König" is a story of the time of the Reformation, and in the person of Georg, a son of the grandmaster of the Order of German Knights, represents the conflict between the new religion and the old. "Die Geschwister" ("The Brother and Sister") contains really two novels, the first of which, "Cavalry Captain von Alt-Rosen" (1647) gives an extremely effective picture of the moral and physical devastation wrought by the Thirty Years' War. The second, "The Volunteer Corporal at the Margrave Albrecht," extends into the eighteenth century and furnishes interesting pictures of Prussian military life and the methods by which Frederic William I. laid the foundations of the Prussian state. But altogether, though much research and no mean gift of narration are displayed in this elaborate series, the

reader is frequently reminded of Goethe's dictum concerning historical scholarship :

"The ages of the past
Are now a book with seven seals protected ;
What you the Spirit of the Ages call
Is nothing but the spirit of you all
Wherein the ages are reflected."

A firmer place than Freytag in the affection of transatlantic readers had Berthold Auerbach, whose death in 1882 we have scarcely ceased to lament. His novel, "On the Heights," made the round of the world and carried its author's reputation to the antipodes. And yet, ungracious as the assertion may seem, this book shows plainly enough that Auerbach was not an integral part of the nation which he undertook to describe, and could not, however much he yearned to do so, feel entirely as it felt, and depict from the inside its sentiments and experiences. Of the keenest exterior observation "On the Heights" gives abundant evidence, but all the figures, even the sturdy Walpurga and her Hansei, are more or less "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." There is a still, small voice whispering, half unperceived, through every one of them, and that voice is Berthold Auerbach, or rather Berthold Auerbach's idol, Spinoza. Walpurga and Hansei certainly display a marvellous degree of religious toleration—a most unusual characteristic, as everyone will admit, among peasants—and a freedom from prejudice which they could never have acquired except by

passing through the Spinozistic mind of Auerbach. Old Count Eberhard, too, seems to have derived his hard-won wisdom from the same source, and Colonel Bronnen and Dr. Gunther — in fact everyone whom the author regards as admirable—have all drunk, whether avowedly or not, from the pure fount of Spinoza. Now there is, to my mind, no doubt that Spinoza is the greatest philosopher of modern times, and that Hegel, Fichte, and even Kant have in no such manner, by pure inductive reasoning, anticipated the conclusions of modern scientific thought. He unquestionably deserves all the admiration which Auerbach bestows upon him. But for all that, one may question the wisdom of making propaganda for him in a novel, especially when the value of the novel, as a work of art, is thereby perceptibly injured. Auerbach, as those who had the good fortune to know him are aware, habitually breathed this rarefied ether of philosophic thought, and with the clear-sightedness and freedom from prejudice of an "emancipated" Jew he viewed the world frankly through this medium. Apparently he did not discover until a few months before his death how isolated his position was on these upper altitudes of the mind, and how far removed even the cultured classes in Germany were from that serene and unbiassed attitude with which he had credited them. "But my God!" he exclaimed to an American friend on his return from the Spinoza festival in Holland, where the mob could scarcely be restrained from attacking him, "here I have labored for the German people

unweariedly for nearly fifty years, and this is what I get for it. Is it not terrible?" He seemed utterly broken in spirit; and it is the common opinion among his friends that the "Judenhetze" killed him. He had contemplated humanity serenely and with kindly interest through his clear Spinozistic spectacles; and he had not been aware that humanity had all the while viewed him through a pair of intensely colored mediæval glasses. No wonder the discovery was a shock to him. It was a pity he could not have anticipated in spirit Spielhagen's noble tribute to his memory. It would have brightened his dying hour.

It is yet too soon after Auerbach's death to form any conjecture as to what posterity's estimate will be of his work. Of course posterity will drop nine out of every ten of our present immortals; and I can hardly suppress the conviction that Auerbach will not be among the latest survivors. He was not a sufficiently pronounced representative of anything (unless it be Spinozism) to survive as the exponent of any particular school of thought or the chronicler of any particular phase of civilization. Spielhagen and Freytag have depicted the age, as it shapes itself in Germany, much more objectively and with a deeper knowledge of national characteristics. "On the Heights" is a book of great ability and with a moving and beautifully developed plot. Nevertheless it seems already now old-fashioned. There is a subcurrent of didacticism in it which arrests and often breaks the narrative. The characters occasion-

ally fall out of their *rôles* and preach wisdom that is much beyond them. The same thing occurs again and again in the "Black Forest Village Tales;" for instance, in the journal of the village school-master, "The Lauterbacher," and the philosophical disquisitions of the rebellious peasant Lucian in "Lucifer." What Auerbach has contributed to German literature is chiefly his own noble personality, and no one will deny that this is a valuable contribution. He has illustrated himself, and distributed disguised counterfeits of himself in all his works, and in their *ensemble* these form a most interesting individuality. On the Galton plan of "composite portraiture" the resulting "pictorial average" of the whole Auerbach gallery would be Auerbach himself. To a certain extent this may perhaps be asserted of every prominent author. I question, however, if it be true of the very greatest. Neither Tourguéneff nor Thackeray could be successfully reconstructed from the types which they have created, even though the latter reveals himself freely enough in his marginal comments.

It is a notable fact that the latest school of novel-writing, of which Zola is the most aggressive representative, has as yet made no conspicuous convert in Germany. Spielhagen has in one of his latest books, "Theorie und Technik des Romans," entered a formal protest against the tendencies of the naturalistic school, without, however, denying the ability which is expended in its service. And when Spielhagen, who is the most radical thinker among German

authors, judges in this way, it is safe to conclude that the others, with the possible exception of Paul Heyse, are even severer in their judgment. But Spielhagen's radicalism appears to be based upon philosophical convictions which antedate the scientific developments of recent years. Moreover, his method, which he has in the above-named book exhaustively explained and accounted for, was already formed, and like a well-constructed tool, is admirably adapted for his purpose. No wonder, then, that he should look askance at the innovations of a fanatic iconoclast and denunciator like Zola. That he is likewise, in his estimate of Daudet, disposed to be unsympathetic is, I think, due to a certain temperamental dislike for the frivolous conception of life and the apparently shallow solutions of the social problems with which the French authors are apt to content themselves. Spielhagen would probably be disinclined to subscribe to Mr. Charles Dudley Warner's proposition, that the prime requisite of the novel is that it should entertain; nor do I suppose that he would be entirely satisfied with Mr. James's emendation, that its object should be to represent life. He would, of course, admit that it ought to do both; but in his hands the definition undergoes a further and very characteristic enlargement. The business of novelists, he says (*"Theorie und Technik des Romans,"* p. 262) is: *"Weltbilder aufzustellen—Bilder ihres Volkes und seiner Strebungen in einem gewissen Zeitabschnitt;"* e.g., to give world-pictures—pictures of their nation and its

aspirations during a certain period. The personal episode, then, in Spielhagen is related primarily with a view to illustrate the national problems and aspirations at a certain period. It is necessary to bear this proposition in mind if one is to do full justice to Spielhagen's literary activity. From his very first work until the last he has been faithful to the large purpose which he has here enunciated, and the profound pleasure which I have found in reading his works is perhaps also due to the fact that I have recognized their typical quality and their direct bearing upon the great questions which agitate the century. One may agree or disagree, accept or reject his solutions of these problems, but his strong and earnest voice will never fail to stimulate one's thought and rouse one from the indolent lethargy which the fatalistic philosophy of modern life induces. The reason why his novels have never gained the popularity here that was freely accorded to Auerbach is scarcely far to seek. They were too serious for the average American reader, who cares little for the problems which, as he flatters himself, merely concern the effete monarchies; and, unhappily, popularity can never be obtained except from the average reader. The people who wept over the cheap sentimentalism of Marlitt and Werner found little to appeal to them in the tragic perspective and uncompromising logic of such works as "Problematic Characters," "In Rank and File," and "Hammer and Anvil." We are so unaccustomed to look for any deeper historic significance in the plots of our

own novelists, that we occasionally fail to perceive it even where it exists. That larger vision which sees not only incidents and personal relations, but recognizes their bearing upon the grand social movements of the century, is extremely rare among us—is in fact extremely rare everywhere. But it is just this vision which distinguishes Spielhagen among German authors, and which would make his popularity problematic among any people less thoughtful than the Germans. Freytag, as I have endeavored to show, possesses the same gift in an eminent degree, and altogether a tendency to philosophic generalization may be said to be a national characteristic. The German critic looks for it as naturally as our own remains blind to it; and he judges the value of a novel, *cæteris paribus*, by its presence or absence, by the relevancy of its types, and by the consistency with which its philosophical purpose is carried out. It is particularly perceptible how, since the re-establishment of the empire and the centralization of the national life in Berlin, the novelist has, in this respect, gained an advantage which during the old scattered condition he must have missed. Berlin is now the only city in Germany which, in the American sense of the word, is alive, and all the other little capitals where petty courts reside have sunk into absolute insignificance. Nevertheless, it was from the narrow horizon of Weimar that Goethe contemplated the great panorama of the century, and the influence of the old "particularism" is perceptible in his character and on every page of "Wil-

helm Meister." Jean Paul must have heard but very feebly the pulse-beat of the age in his rural retreat at Hof; and one wonders how Freytag could have surveyed the great movements of civilization from his villa at Siebleben, in the shadow of the little court at Gotha. His university career at Leipzig, to be sure, gave him a post of vantage, and, as we know from his own confession, it was there the material accumulated for his two important novels. If, however, he had undertaken to pursue into the present the theme which he has so ably treated in "Debit and Credit," I cannot but think that he would have shown the effect of the national consolidation as vigorously as Spielhagen does in "Sturmflut."

It is not often that social problems have received such exhaustive, philosophic, and yet thoroughly dramatic treatment in a novel as is accorded to them in "Sturmflut." The book deals with the effect of the French milliards upon the German state and society at large; the speculative mania that followed; the decay of old-fashioned rectitude; the increased burdens resulting from official extravagance; the growing discontent of the working classes, who were debarred from enjoying the profits of the war though sharers in its tribulations. All these things are held in hand firmly by the author, and it is a real pleasure to observe how this whole complex plot moves forward, preserving throughout its typical character. The impartiality with which the virtues and the limitations of the nobleman as

well as those of the citizen are depicted, indicates a more cosmopolitan view, and perhaps a riper experience, than was exhibited in the treatment of similar relations in "Problematic Characters" and "Through Night to Light." The varied and brilliant metropolitan life of the German capital is set in motion before our eyes, and the whirling activity of clashing interests which emanates from here to the remotest corner of the empire serves only to complicate the situations and to deepen their interest. Such a novel could not have been written with the same degree of vividness and power in the old languid ante-bellum capital of Prussia; and a lively sense of the contrast between the old state of affairs and the new can be realized by comparing the novels of Spielhagen's first period with those of his second. The "problematic character"—the man who was destroyed by his own genius, and fit for no position which the State could then offer—was his typical hero. The German State had no need of genius, unless it were a strategic one. There was no public life to speak of: the State was a semi-military corporation, which could be best administered by mediocrities. Therefore those who were burdened with an excess of ability or critical insight consumed their hearts in discontent or wasted them in love-adventures. Love was, in fact, the only legitimate business in those days for a man of genius, and death on the barricades the legitimate end of a life wasted in love and talk and insatiable longings.

The situation is now somewhat different ; and the change is again faithfully chronicled in Spielhagen's novels. Germany has now a quasi-constitution which a powerful Chancellor may be inclined to ignore, and perhaps openly violate. The militant spirit fostered by the late war has brought about a reaction toward autocracy, and a consequent decay of parliamentary institutions. The reaction, as every clear-sighted man must know, is of course temporary, but it is dangerous as long as it lasts, and retards the industrial development of the nation. A most oppressive system of protection (only rivalled in foolish severity by our own) increases the cost of living—makes the poor poorer and the rich richer. A vast military machinery is needed to keep the discontented in order, and only feeds the socialistic sentiment which it is intended to suppress. The whole force of evolution and the relentless logic of history are on the side of the oppressed masses, and in the end their cause must prevail.

Everyone will admit that in a situation like this there is abundant material for a novelist with Spielhagen's ability to discern the forces at work beneath the social movements. His works, which extend over the last thirty-five years, though some of them deal with earlier periods, are to my mind the most valuable and faithful chronicles of German life and thought during the last quarter century that we possess.

Paul Heyse, who at present shares with Spielhagen and Freytag the favor of the German public,

I shall also have to dismiss more briefly than his importance warrants. It is, however, chiefly as a writer of short stories that he has gained his fame, and the short story I have excluded from my consideration in the present paper. Paul Heyse's two long novels, "The Children of the World" and "In Paradise," are, with all their undeniable ability, so remote from the horizon of American readers, that I should only do injustice to the author in attempting to characterize them. His radicalism asserts itself chiefly within the pale of ethics; the traditional barriers which civilization has gradually imposed upon society seem to him too narrow, and with much ingenuity he devises situations in which the natural feeling would seem to side with the law-breaker. It is especially the matrimonial rebel who commands Heyse's sympathy—the youth or the maiden who, in the ardor of youth or yielding to outside pressure, has tied him or her self to an uncongenial partner and is paying the penalty of a daily martyrdom. Madame Toulmonde, the German Mrs. Grundy, has a great dread of Heyse, and it is said she keeps his books on the poison-shelf in her locked closet. Their pages are, however, dog-eared and well fingered.

Among the rebellious men of genius whom Germany has produced (and I have endeavored to show that a man of genius in Germany has much excuse for being a rebel) no one holds a place closer to the popular heart than the late Fritz Reuter. Unfortunately, however, the period of Reuter's rebellion

preceded his productive period, and he had the ill-luck to be sentenced to death for having belonged to a patriotic student society (*Burschenschaft*) and having written some enthusiastic verses in an autograph-album about "fatherland" and "liberty." That was a dangerous experiment in those days; and though Reuter was pardoned, he had to spend seven long years of his youth in being dragged about from one military jail to the other, and in drinking brandy with his jailers, who found him a jolly companion. Both the brandy and the idleness of such a life proved fatal to Reuter, and it was only to save himself from absolute ruin that, after his release, he turned in despair to literature. Oddly enough, it was as a humorist that he made his fame; there is not a particle of indignation in his books against those who so cruelly wrecked his life. He drew on the early reminiscences of his boyhood in his native town of Stavenhagen, in Mecklenburg, and with inimitable drollery reproduced the quaint speech and manner of his fellow-townsmen. His realism is almost photographic in its minuteness, and yet full of concessions to the prevalent romantic taste. Pathetic in the extreme is his description (written, as all his works, in the *Plattdeutsch* dialect) of his release from the fortress and his first outlook into the strange world after his long imprisonment. Several of his novels, particularly "Ut mine Stromtid" and "Ut mine Festungstid," have been translated into English, but they lose so much in the translation that one can hardly form any conception

of their effective blending of humor and pathos in the original.

For all that, it is not to be denied that Reuter's art is crude. He makes no pretence of impartiality. He scolds his bad characters roundly, and will leave them no shred of honor; and he takes the part of his good characters with equal vehemence. A slightly hysterical vein, reminding one of Dickens, runs through all his books. His characterizations are vivid, but drawn in rather a slovenly, haphazard way, which seems to concern itself but little about the result. The charm of his tales (which also accounts for their artistic shortcomings) is their tone of genial improvisation. They are written in a conversational key, and have all the artlessness, spontaneity, and impressiveness of good talk. So vivid becomes this impression, at times, that the reader instinctively supplies the cadence of the human voice. But judged by the canons of literary art, Reuter's books are, with all their chaotic strength, defective.

Of Professor Georg Ebers, whose Egyptian romances have gained a great popularity in Germany, I need scarcely speak at any length. With him art seems to be the mere handmaid of scholarship; and as knowledge clothed in so attractive a form could not fail to prove alluring, his easy conquest of the public is not to be marvelled at. Nevertheless, a novel equipped with learned references and profuse scholarly footnotes strikes one oddly, and the conscientiousness with which the author has studied his hieroglyphics and explored the tombs of the Pharaohs

can scarcely compensate for the absence of that nameless charm which only a highly developed artistic faculty can supply. A vivid dramatic movement is, to be sure, not lacking in any of Ebers's romances, and excitement is also plentifully supplied, varied with descriptions which are full of color and animation. For all that, his books often tax the patience of the transatlantic reader severely, in spite of the satisfaction one naturally feels at having acquired so valuable an insight into the heart of a remote civilization. Archæological love-making, murders, abductions, and intrigues of diabolical ingenuity are traced in bold relief against a background of sphinxes and pyramids. But all this complexity of plot is sustained by characters of great simplicity. Cambyeses, Phanes, and that arch-villain Boges, in "An Egyptian Princess," are of that order of crude uncomposite stock characters with which all primitive fiction abounds. There is no fine shading in their portraiture, no subtle art. Even Nitetis is wholly modern in sentiment, and except in name, no more archaic than Ethel Newcome or Amelia in "Vanity Fair." She does, however, for this very reason enchain the reader's interest. She even arouses in his bosom a certain tenderness for the mummies in the Metropolitan Museum and a desire for their nearer acquaintance. Was not Moses, perhaps, a trifle prejudiced in his view of the Egyptians, and would it not be well to read "Homo Sum" and "Uarda" before giving our sympathies unreservedly to the Israelites in "that memorable conflict?" Sensational

in the vulgar sense Ebers's romances are not, although they revel in an excess of exciting incidents; but it may well be taken for granted that the violent incidents with which they deal were as normal in the time of the Pharaohs as the eventless chronicles of Howells and James are to-day. As civilization progresses, incidents of the kind which novel-readers crave, involving some sort of mental or physical violence, must necessarily become more scarce; and the exploration of insane asylums and police-courts, or any of the agencies which are provided for the care of the laggards-behind of civilization, merely because a depraved public taste demands the abnormal rather than the typical, is certainly an undignified proceeding on the part of anyone who claims the name of an artist. Among the German novelists of to-day there is really no one who has the fearlessness to depend exclusively upon his charm as a narrator, and to deal in the manner of George Eliot with the quiet soul-histories of common people. But it may be answered that life in a semi-feudal state like Germany has necessarily more color and incident of the exciting sort than our tame and unrelieved democracy. The mere system of caste, with all the complex sentiments which it engenders, is a most precious agency to the novelist, affording him opportunities for contrasts and conflicts which in our republican society have only feeble counterparts. Nevertheless, as this system is doomed, the German novelist of the twentieth century may have to face the problem of making a democracy entertaining.

X.

"CARMEN SYLVA"

IN a certain sense, all writing is autobiographical, as it reveals, directly or indirectly, the tendencies and limitations of the writer's mind. Of authorship, in the higher sense, this is particularly true, though the degree of self-revelation varies in accordance with temperament and circumstances. The lyric poet is necessarily a tuneful egoist, who mirrors his soul's physiognomy *en face* or *en profil* with more or less interesting distortions in the babbling brooklet of his song. Goethe, the greatest lyric genius of the century, set his own heart to music; and Heine, who follows close behind him, drew no less freely upon his emotional experience:

*"Aus meinen Thränen spriessen
Viel blühende Blumen hervor,
Und meine Seufzer werden
Ein Nachtigallenchor."*

When I say that "Carmen Sylva," the Queen of Rumania, is a lyrist, and in the cadence of her song, though not in her philosophy of life, closely akin to Heine, it is almost superfluous to add that the auto-

biographical note in her is distinctly audible, and at times dominant. There is a charming spontaneity in her verse which suffices to show that her talent is genuine. In fact, so warmly and impetuously do her feelings and emotions rise from the depth of her ardent nature, that she scarcely finds time to give them an adequate artistic expression. The conception is fine, the fundamental thought poetic, in nearly all that she has written; but the headlong zeal with which it is unfolded and developed leaves no opportunity for that attention to detail without which the highest excellence is never achieved. When, for all that, I regard "Carmen Sylva's" writings as worthy of the popularity they have gained, it is because they are vital, because there throbs a warm and noble heart through them, and we feel behind them a living personality. This personality is so distinct that it is easily described. It is, moreover, everywhere the same, and the masks with which fiction disguises it are so transparent that the voice (which in both "Carmen Sylva's" novels speaks in the first person) were scarcely needed for purposes of identification. But this voice is sweet and sympathetic, and lingers in the memory.

"Carmen Sylva's" first work was published in 1880. It is a translation into German of the most eminent Rumanian poets—Constantine Negruzzi, Vasilio Alexandri, and Scherbanescu. These are strange-sounding names to us. Not the faintest echo of their fame has reached our shores.

Of the merit of the translation it is difficult to judge, for the Rumanian language looks to the uninitiated more puzzling than Chinese, and more bewilderingly polysyllabic than the dialects of the North American Indians.

One acquires respect for the Queen's intellect from the mere fact of her having mastered such an awe-inspiring language. What strikes one in the volume, besides the easy and melodious flow of the translations, is the modern tone of these remote and unknown poets. Schopenhauer actually has a Rumanian disciple named Eminesca, who prefers non-existence to existence ; the same battles of thought which agitate the rest of the world reverberate also through the intellectual atmosphere of the Danubian kingdom. The impassioned lyrics and the simple and vigorous ballads of Alexandri well deserve a place in the world's literature, and to have made them accessible to the great European public constitutes one of the Queen's many claims to the gratitude of her people.

The task of translating apparently revealed to the Queen her own poetic resources. Her first original work was a volume of narrative poems entitled "Storms," which is dedicated in the following earnest and impressive lines (translated by Miss Helen Zimmern), to her fellow-sufferers, the women :

"Ye, having heart and strength to bear
Deep in the fervent glowing soul,
Whom the fierce flames of Passion's self
But strengthen, making firm and whole.

" Ye, having might, when tempests rage,
To lift the head free, fearing naught,
Whom the heart pressing weight of life
Rules with the sway of earnest thought.

" Ye, breathing only light and warmth
Forever like a true sun's ray,
Till tenderly the bare, black earth
Kindness and joy brings forth straightway.

" Smiling, great burdens ye have borne,
Mountains of woe, and still smile on ;
Guerdonless where no trumpets sound,
Victorious battles have ye won.

" There laurel is not, nor proud fame ;
There secret tear-drops fall like dew ;
O heroes whom no crowds proclaim,
Women, I give this book to you."

Miss Zimmern has anticipated me in saying that "Sappho," the principal poem in this volume, is quite un-Greek. It is, in fact, both in form and conception, as Germanic as possible. It has none of the bright sensuousness and heedless grace of Greek song. The fateful dream of Laïs, the daughter of Sappho, with which the poem opens, bears some resemblance to the dream of Chriemhild in the first canto of the "Niebelungen Lay," although butterflies are substituted for eagles. But apart from the moral anachronism which is implied in the domestic virtues and Teutonic conscientiousness of the Lesbian poetess, there is much to admire. As a mere woman, without reference to age or nationality, Sappho is vividly delineated, and the songs

which she sings, though they have neither the Sapphic meter nor spirit, we could ill afford to miss. Thus the charming little lay: "Wenn todt ich werde sein," in the third canto, has an "unpremeditated art" which none but true singers attain. It expires like a sigh in the air, and is as eloquent of the emotion which prompted it.

The hexameter in "Sappho" is handled with skill; but the perpetually recurring alliteration interferes with its melodious effect. As a metrical device alliteration is of Germanic origin, and seems alien to the spirit of Greek poetry. There is also a certain exasperating monotony in the constantly repeated initial letters, which gives an air of artificiality even to the noblest verse. As a criticism of less moment it might be permissible to ask why Sappho's lover is called Memnon, when history supplies the scarcely less resonant name of Alkæus.

The word "Sturmesseele" (storm soul), which occurs repeatedly in "Sappho," and which is more or less descriptive of all the Queen's heroines, contains also the formula of her own character. Astra, in the epistolary novel of that name, and the Princess Ulrike zu Horst Rauchenstein, in "From Two Worlds," are both pronounced types of the tempestuous soul. Daringly unconventional, headstrong, generous to a fault, affectionate and impulsive—such is the type of womanhood with which "Carmen Sylva" sympathizes, and which she most completely comprehends. Naturally enough such characters come into frequent conflicts with reality, as inherit-

ed custom and tradition have moulded it; and the result is usually tragic. For no single individual, even though armed with right and justice, can cope with the world. The Lilliputians are always stronger than Gulliver. And when the moral question at issue is, as in the case of *Astra*, more than questionable, it is even for the good of society that the tempestuous soul should succumb. We may sympathize with its suffering and deplore its fate; but, sociologically considered, we cannot declare that either the one or the other is unjust.

The problem in "*Astra*" is an old one, and there is nothing in the book, except the picturesque and effective setting of the scenes in the *terra incognita* of one of the Danubian principalities. The vigorous characterization of the heroine and the accessory figures compensates for the entire absence of a plot, in the old-fashioned sense. *Astra* belongs evidently to

"jenem Stamm der *Astra*
Welche sterben wenn sie lieben."

It is unhappily her sister's husband whom she loves; and there is obviously no solution possible except death. In the case of the Princess Ulricke, in "*From Two Worlds*," the tempestuous character triumphs over the obstacles which tradition interposes between her and happiness. Carried away by the beauty of a book dealing with ancient Greek art, she enters into correspondence with the author, under the supposition that he is a hoary and venerable scholar, whose suggestions may be likely to im-

prove her mind. That he turns out to be a young and handsome man (professor though he is) follows, as a matter of course ; and that the intellectual tone of the correspondence should gradually change into a personal and semi-sentimental one is also what might have been expected. But what in a queen is wholly surprising and shows a remarkable independence of character, is the circumstance that this paragon of manly beauty and intellectual vigor is represented as an advanced radical in his political opinions, and does not even shun to apply to himself the name "social-democrat." He belongs to the class of the so-called "Katheder-Socialisten ;" i.e., didactic, professorial socialists, who believe (with Lasalle) that the State must eventually take the place of corporations as employers of labor and *entrepreneurs* in industrial enterprise. He has a wholesome pride in his *bourgeois* origin, and a violent prejudice against nobles and princes. This does not, however, prevent him from constructing, in fancy, a fascinating image of his princely correspondent, or from visiting her *incognito*, in the guise of a piano-tuner. The princess, who with all her grandeur leads a lonely and isolated life, also expends a great deal of romantic sentiment on her learned plebeian, and finally elopes with him and marries him. The inevitable stormy scenes ensue, and the happy *dénouement* is only brought about by the birth of a child, and a meeting between the prince and the plebeian at what is supposed to be the death-bed of the young mother.

Now, the interest of this little complication is in the light it throws upon the author's character.

A wholesome—I might almost say a homely—nature breathes through all these epistles. It is the stormy soul whom we have already learned to know in "Sappho," but more humanly real, more tender and lovable. All that is known of the Queen's character harmonizes so well with it that, in a wholly psychological way, the book becomes autobiographical. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that her own childhood and her early environment must have furnished the material for the letters dealing with the Princess Ulricke's daily life in the lonely but beautiful Castle Rauchenstein. That she was a very headstrong and ungovernable child, much inclined to adventurous enterprise and independent judgments, is well known; and that her princely dignity sat very lightly upon her during those years we may conclude from the anecdotes related by Miss Zimmern. She was born December 29, 1843, and is, accordingly, now forty-eight years old. Her father, Prince Hermann von Wied, was a general in the Prussian army, and belonged to one of the oldest dynastic families of Germany. He was a man of great culture, interested in metaphysical studies, and published three able books dealing with philosophical subjects. The Princess Elizabeth, his daughter, thus came naturally by her love of study and her predilection for authorship. It was her delight in her childhood to ignore her rank and mix with "common children," to whom she eagerly im-

parted her newly-acquired knowledge, or indulged in rough and noisy games, which were held to be neither maidenly nor aristocratic. Her ambition at that time was to become a school-mistress—to elevate and benefit her kind by teaching and by example. To live her own life, to work out her own individuality, was her idea of happiness. And as her impulses were naturally generous, and lessons of compassion and charity had been early impressed upon her by a wise mother, her own happiness consisted in spreading happiness about her. She often followed literally the biblical precept to give to him who asked for the coat the cloak also; and there was danger that, unless restrained, she might give away her entire wardrobe.

On one occasion (as related by her sympathetic biographer) she took it into her head to attend the village school; and, without awaiting the consent of her mother, took to her heels and burst into the astonished assembly of school-children. The school-master, who knew her by sight, did not interrupt the lesson on her account, but allowed her to participate in the exercises. When the singing began she joined so heartily with her strong, impetuous voice that the performance had all the effect of a solo. Her neighbor, a little girl who herself had musical pretensions, became so exasperated at her vigorous performance that, forgetting all ceremony, she put her hand over the princess's mouth. Before she had time to resent this liberty, a servant arrived from the castle and carried her home in disgrace.

The hand of the young Princess of Wied was naturally sought by many wooers ; but her personality was too positive, too titanic to contemplate the compromises and sacrifices of individual tastes which matrimony necessitates with any degree of pleasure. Like Brünhilde in the Völsunga Saga, her heart could only be awakened by a hero who had the courage to ride through the wall of flame. She was wont to say jocosely—merely to express how remote the idea of marriage was from her mind—that she would never marry, unless she could become Queen of Rumania. In the first place Rumania was not then a kingdom, but a tributary dependency of the Porte, and, secondly, the miserable Prince Cousa, who governed it, was a married man. If Princess Elizabeth had declared that she would never marry unless she could be Empress of China, the contingency would scarcely have appeared less improbable. But it is sometimes the most improbable that happens. During a visit to the Court of Berlin, she slipped in going downstairs, and fell into the arms of the gentleman who was destined to become King of Rumania—viz., Prince Charles of Hohenzollern. When the latter, in 1868, became Prince Cousa's successor, he took Princess Elizabeth at her word, and offered her the opportunity to share with him the Rumanian throne. That that throne was for a time extremely unstable we all know, and that it is so no longer is in a large measure due to the tact, the wisdom, and the unbounded benevolence of the Queen. The German nationality is not beloved in

the Danubian kingdom ; nay, it is almost hated among all the Slavonic tribes. To have overcome this stubborn and deep-rooted prejudice by the force of her noble and lovable character is an achievement the magnitude of which few, outside of Rumania, are able to estimate. The indefatigable activity of the Queen for the welfare of her subjects has touched their hearts, and they have rewarded her with one of those affectionate pet names with which the Slavonic languages abound. "Little Mother," the peasants call her ; and a mother she has been to them in many ways. Hospitals, soup-kitchens, industrial schools, art galleries, etc., testify to her vigilant care both for their bodies and their minds. She has, indeed, become a school-mistress in the most exalted sense. A throne offers facilities for teaching which no other tribune affords, and Rumania, which under the cruel and degrading rule of the Turk had sunk into semi-barbarism, presented a field for a crowned benefactress such as scarcely another European state did. Her sympathy with toil, her respect for all honest labor and all spheres of usefulness, is obvious in every line of her "Songs of Toil." They are not mere melodious fancies, or romantic conceits, with which any imaginative aristocrat might beguile his gilded leisure ; but homely and sincere rhymes, entering into the very spirit of each trade, and seizing upon its human and pathetic phases. "Carmen Sylva" has earned the right to sing "Songs of Toil ;" for her own life, although passed upon the highest altitudes of society, has

been one of arduous and incessant labor. That there is heroic stuff in her she has shown on more than one occasion ; but especially during the terrible winter of 1877-1878, when the Russo-Turkish war raged. Like a ministering angel she went among the wounded soldiers, relieving their wants, assisting at amputations, comforting the suffering, and receiving the last messages of the dying. A public monument in Bucharest commemorates her noble activity during this year of triumph and sorrow.

As a wife and mother the Queen has also known affliction, having lost her only child, a daughter of four years. She has cared little for the mere tinsel-show and glitter of life since then, but has turned her attention to its great and enduring realities. Like Faust (in the second part of Goethe's masterpiece) she finds happiness after having abandoned all conscious striving for personal well-being. In the social and moral sphere she conquers, like him, the land from the unruly ocean, and wrings fertility and a thousand blessings from the waste wilderness. From a hint in her novelette, "*Es Klopft*" (It Knocks), it is obvious that by her own warm-hearted charity she wishes to raise a memorial in every breast to the dear one she has lost. The story of the little Friedlein and the blessings that flowed from his premature death could only have been written out of a personal experience. It is only small natures whom sorrow paralyzes. The Queen has made hers a source of happiness to hundreds of

her fellow-men. It has given an outward, altruistic vent to her energies ; partly from an innate need of action, peculiar to the strong, partly to escape from brooding over her loss, she clothed the naked, fed the hungry, comforted the afflicted, and lightened the burdens of the heavy-laden.

"Carmen Sylva's" books, which contain a spiritualized and symbolical record of the experiences through which she has passed, have followed each other in such rapid succession that space will not permit me to give an account of all. The book which interests me most as an evidence of earnest thought and a faculty of expression is a poem entitled "Jehovah." The hero of this book is Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, but the cause of his eternal wandering is not, as in the legend, his denial of a resting-place to the Saviour on his way to Golgotha. "Carmen Sylva's" Ahasuerus denies the suffering Christ, because he cannot conceive of a God who can suffer ; but the curse that drives him eternally onward is his determination to live until he shall have solved the riddle of creation—until he shall see God. He goes to the edge of the desert and listens to the sound with which the statue of Memnon greets the dawn, in the hope of distinguishing the answer to the riddle. He seeks God in gold and precious stones, in song, in war for Islam ; and everywhere he wins the highest praise and distinction. But nowhere does he find Him whom he seeks. At last he becomes an artist, and recognizes, while fashioning his ideas in marble and

color, the evolution of all ideals, the eternal, infinitely progressive development in the world of matter as in the world of thought. This progressive, evolutionary impulse, this creative energy that never rests or ceases, he hails as God. "*Gott ist ewig Werden*" is his final conclusion, which gives him peace and permits him to die. Whatever we may think of this declaration, which is pantheistic rather than Christian, it would be vain to deny the beauty and dignity of the verse in which the wrestlings of Ahasuerus with the infinite are depicted.

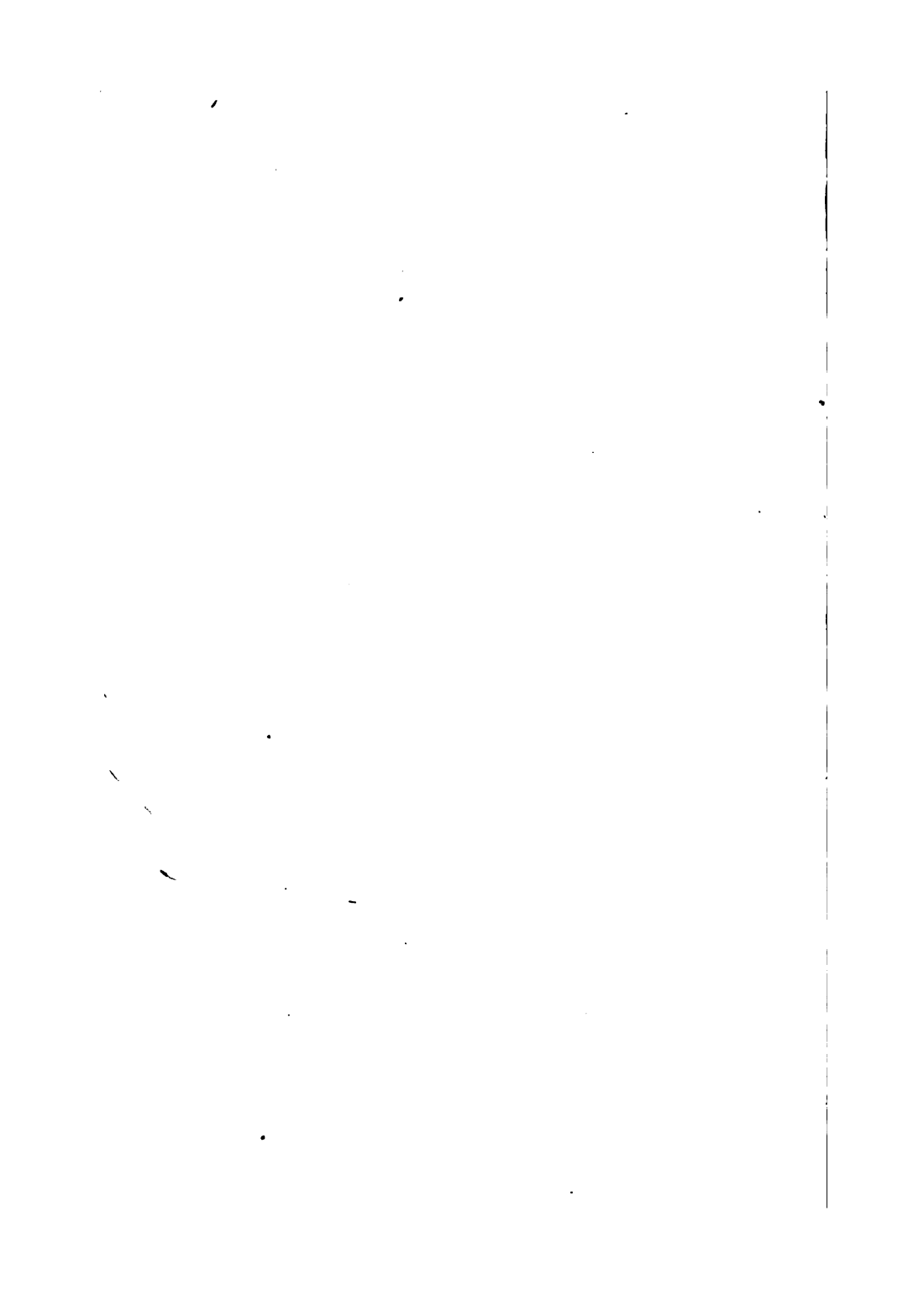
Scarcely inferior to this poem in value, though of a totally different character, is the volume of "*Pelesch-Märchen*" (Fairy Tales of the *Pelesch*), which has all the fantastic and artless character of real folk-lore, and which, we should judge, must have some basis in popular tradition. The tales entitled "*Leidens Erdengang*" (Sorrow's Earthly Pilgrimage) give in allegorical form the history of the Queen's own spiritual life, her sorrow, her despair, and her final attainment of peace.

It is a noble life and a rich personality that are revealed to us in the writings of "Carmen Sylva;" and if she had not a crown already, she might conquer one in the realm of song.

But the royal rank seems, somehow, to be a disqualification for the highest literary distinction. A certain dilettanteism, showing defective training and wavering purpose, is perceptible in the workmanship of all the Queen's books. The wayward romanticism of her temperament has never been re-

strained by the sort of discipline which experience is apt to supply to less exalted mortals. She has read much, thought much, and felt passionately, but she has never come in close enough contact with life, such as it shows itself to ordinary men, to know it at first hand, and utilize it effectively for the purposes of art. All her tempestuous aspiration, shooting upward with a grand momentum, reaches nowhere, but explodes like a rocket in ineffective pyrotechnics.

**THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL IN GER-
MANY**



XI.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE GERMAN ROMANTIC SCHOOL

THE Italian Renaissance was a revival not only of Greek art, but also of Pagan philosophy, mythology, and religion. The ascetic abstinence, in color as in form, of the pre-Raphaelite masters was supplanted by a joyous splendor of blooming and throbbing flesh, and the galleries which had once witnessed the pictured transports and ecstatic visions of pale nuns and lank saints now suddenly teemed with the spirited scenes of sensuous pleasure. And even where the painter adhered to the old themes from the sacred history, a certain profane delight in mere physical beauty betrayed the influence of the Periclean age.

During the reign of Louis XIV. this Pagan Renaissance invaded France, but it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that it reached Germany. Then Winckelmann devoted his noble life to the writing of that great work on the art of the ancients which first opened the eyes of his countrymen to the true significance of the Greek civilization, and thereby turned the current of the intel-

lectual life of the Fatherland. In order to complete such a work the author had virtually to emancipate himself from the sentiments and traditions of his own century, and in a measure ignore the long process of evolution through which the world had passed since the days of Phidias and Pericles ; and Winckelmann did nothing short of this. In order to make the individual work of art intelligible, he had to reproduce in himself, and through himself in his reader, that sensuous equilibrium which had made its first creation possible, and that ideal simplicity of feeling from which it had sprung. His protest against modern Christianity could not be a conscious one ; he could not denounce it, he could only ignore it. Nevertheless, the theologians did not fail to notice the anti-Christian tendency of his writings, and to decry them accordingly. In the meanwhile another intellectual giant had caught the spirit of the Renaissance, and now the dissatisfaction which had long been gathering broke out in open warfare. Lessing, although disagreeing with Winckelmann on many unessential points, willingly acknowledged himself his pupil, and the struggle with orthodoxy which the latter had indirectly occasioned, the former fought in open and aggressive warfare.

Heine has fittingly characterized Lessing's life in comparing him to those Jews who returned to Jerusalem under Nehemiah : they brandished the sword with one hand, while with the other they rebuilt the temple of God. It was not Christianity

against which Lessing aimed the keen arrows of his wit, but it was bigotry, and more especially bigotry as represented by that arch-prelate, Pastor Götze, in Hamburg. The Protestant clergy of Germany were at that time a kind of self-constituted tribunal, which had assumed to itself the right to censure and, if possible, ostracize from the national literature every production which in spirit or letter was at variance with Lutheran orthodoxy. Accordingly, when Lessing undertook to publish the rationalistic fragments of his deceased friend Reimarus, these watch-dogs of the faith immediately sounded the alarm, and with Götze in their van began those attacks upon "the free-thinker" which with unwearied zeal they continued to the end of his life. To quote another of Heine's sayings, Lessing slew them, and by deigning to slay them he made them immortal; the rocks which he hurled at them in his so-called anti-Götze pamphlets, became their imperishable monuments. Indeed, the athletic stature of his intellect gained him an easy victory in all the literary tilts in which he engaged, and even after his death his country seemed for a long time to be still feeding on the surplus amount of vitality which his vigorous individuality had imparted to it. The intellectual result of his life naturally crystallized itself into certain fixed doctrines and stereotyped phrases, which became the watchwords of a certain clique of men, the well-known Party of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*).

The chief of this party, the bookseller Nicolai,

in Berlin, who regarded himself as Lessing's legitimate heir and successor, with a certain comic perseverance and a grand air of authority, arraigned before his tribunal the rising authors of the land, thus continuing what he conceived to be the spirit of his master's criticism. Lessing had been harsh in his judgment of the *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) school, not even excepting Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* from the general condemnation. Nicolai, perceiving the tendency rather than the degree of merit, therefore persevered in waging war against every incipient literary movement which accorded to emotional strength the prominence which in his opinion belonged only to the rational side of our nature. What had been an unconscious limitation in Lessing's nature, his incapacity to appreciate a purely lyrical talent, degenerated in Nicolai into a conscious, stubborn antipathy against everything which bordered on vehemence. Opposition and ridicule drove the zealous bookseller into ever greater paradoxes. The critical maxims which Lessing had bequeathed to posterity were now no longer new, and by constant repetition and misapplication had begun to pall on the sense of the public. The ancient saws about utility, perspicuity, and morality could now no more cause a sensation, and the people were heartily longing for something new. Lessing had endeavored to establish the supremacy of reason also in matters of religion, and had in his daily life practised toward others the toleration he claimed for himself. Nicolai

and his followers, as is too often the case with men of "advanced opinions," forgot in their partisan zeal the tolerance they were themselves preaching, and by their opposition to everything which conflicted with their own utilitarian tendencies, for a time exerted an unwholesome influence upon the literature of the land. Narrowness of vision, a certain crude, intellectual complacency, utter absence of imagination, extreme utilitarianism, and consequent hostility to everything which points beyond this temporal sphere of existence, were the chief characteristics of this "Period of Enlightenment."

It is self-evident that a school which so entirely ignored the emotional nature of man could not for any length of time satisfy so warm-hearted and imaginative a nation as the Germans. Their Gothic character, with all its mystic depths of gloom and passion and pathos, soon reasserted itself, the protests became louder and louder. A strong tide of reaction rolled over the land, and this reaction has found its literary and historic expression in what is commonly known as the Romantic School. To those who care for a minute and scholarly exposition of the origin and progress of this remarkable movement, I would recommend the exhaustive accounts of Julian Schmidt, R. Haym, and Koberstein. Heine's essay on Romanticism is a most fascinating book, which is equally remarkable for its epigrammatic brilliancy, its striking originality, and its utter injustice and unreliability. A distinguished Danish critic, G. Brandes, rivals Heine in vividness of style, without being in

the same degree liable to the charge of partisanship. My purpose at present is merely to illustrate the movement in its moral and social bearings, to sketch, as it were *en profile*, the more prominent features of the Romantic physiognomy, and, by gathering these into an intelligible portrait, convey to the reader an impression of what Romanticism was, or at least what it purported to be.

Though it was primarily the dry and wooden utilitarianism of the Party of Enlightenment which aroused the hostility of the Romantic authors, the tendency, which they came to represent, was scarcely less hostile to the classicism of Goethe and Schiller. Although Novalis, the brothers Schlegel, and nearly all the champions of the new movement were profoundly stirred by "Wilhelm Meister," and did not stint their admiration of "Faust," and "Hermann und Dorothea," the spirit of Goethe remained alien to them; and as their own convictions developed and became formulated, their antagonism became pronounced and emphatic. Toward Schiller they assumed at first a more tolerant attitude; and after the publication of "The Maid of Orleans" were half inclined to claim him as one of their own. But, for all that, they could not remain blind to the fact that his enthusiasm for Greek antiquity implied an antipathy to their reactionary mediævalism, quite as strong as that of his friend. The modern revolutionary spirit which gives its magnificent vehemence to "The Robbers," and inspires the stormy eloquence of Marquis Posa in "Don Carlos," was, as

the Romanticists could not fail to perceive, a more dangerous foe to their feudal ideals than the placid classicism of "Iphigenia," and "Tasso." And when Schiller, in "The Bride of Messina," even introduced the Greek chorus, and embodied in his drama a tragic fate, no less rigid than that of Æschylus and Sophocles, it was time to protest, in the name of German art, against such forced and artificial standards. As Mr. Brandes says:

"The antique was too severe, people yearned for color and variety; the antique was too plastic, people demanded something warm and musical. The antique was so Greek, so cold, so alien; who could endure reading Goethe's 'Achilleis,' or Schiller's 'Bride of Messina' with its solemn antique choruses? The people longed for something homelike and German. The antique was too aristocratic, and the enthusiasm for the classical was carried so far that even the old court poetry from the time of Louis XIV. was reinstated in honor. But ought not art to be for all classes? Ought it not to unite high and low? Something simple and popular was desired. The classical movement was, in fine, too sober. Lessing's bright religion of reason had, in the hands of the bookseller Nicolai, become a dull rationalism. . . . The pantheism of Goethe could not warm the hearts of the masses; Schiller's 'The Sending of Moses' would scandalize a believer, and to be 'poetical' was certainly not the same as to be 'sober.' People wished to be enthusiastic; they wished to become intoxicated and

enraptured. They wished to believe like a child, feel the knight's enthusiasm and the monk's ecstasy; they wished to rave poetically, dream melodiously, bathe in moonshine, mystically feel the spirits flitting in the Milky Way. They wanted to hear the grass grow and understand what the birds said. Deep into the moon-illuminated night we are conducted by Tieck—into the moonshine of which he sings:

“ ‘Mondbeglänzte Zaubernacht,
Die den Sinn gefangen hält,
Wundervolle Märchenwelt,
Steig' auf in der alten Pracht.’ ” *

It was a goodly array of poets, wits, and philosophers which, in the year 1798, gathered about the Romantic banner as displayed in the columns of *The Athenæum*, the first organ of the school. It is noticeable that they were nearly all young men, all sworn enemies of the *Philisterthum* (Philistinism), all filled with revolutionary ardor and eager for battle. Their object, as the first number of their journal announces, was to concentrate the rays of culture in one focus, and to re-establish the eternal synthesis of poetry and philosophy. This, to be sure, is rather vague, and the next manifesto, contained in the second number of *The Athenæum*, is not much more explicit:

“ Romantic poetry is progressive and universal.

* G. Brandes: *Den Romantiske Skole i Tydskland*, pp. 237, 238.

Its aim is not only to reunite all the severed branches of poetic art, and to bring poetry into contact with philosophy ; it is also to blend and combine poetry and prose, genius and criticism, the poetry of nature and the poetry of art, make poetry living and social, and life and society poetic. . . . Like an epos, it is to be the mirror of all the surrounding world, an image of the age. . . . Only a prophetic criticism would dare to characterize its ideal. It alone is infinite, because it alone is free and recognizes as its first law that the free will of the poet brooks no law above it ; that beauty is something apart from truth and morality, and is entitled to equal rights. . . . Like transcendental idealism, Romantic poetry—and in a certain sense all poetry ought to be romantic—should in representing outward objects also represent itself. If poetry is to be an art, then the poet must philosophize ; in the same degree as poetry is made a science, it also becomes an art."

This confused document, which defies every effort at a clear and accurate translation, is remarkable as showing that Romanticism was, from its very outset, a conscious and deliberate movement. All the tendencies which during the next decade blossomed into full vigor are here distinctly indicated : rebellion against existing social laws, foreshadowed by the hint about the identification of life and poetry, the sovereignty of genius, and the morbid self-reflection which, by co-ordinating poetry with philosophy, makes it a speculative art and

thereby kills that warm spontaneity of utterance in which rests the chief strength of the poet. The author of this bold manifesto was Friedrich Schlegel, in whom all the extravagances, as well as many of the nobler qualities, of the rising school found their living embodiment. In the scope and reach of his faculties he was excelled by few of his Romantic colleagues. His mind, thronged with fine possibilities and overflowing with a certain chaotic fruitfulness, seems to have resembled an antediluvian landscape; unruly passions like dark reptiles slept in its depths of philosophic contemplation; trees and ferns of strange, primeval growth sprung from its soil; but the more delicate flowers of sentiment seem to have been choked by these luxuriant exotics. The description given by his most intimate friend, Schleiermacher, will make the portrait of this youthful Titan intelligible. He possessed, evidently, not only the strength but also something of the coarseness, of the primeval race. "He is exceedingly childlike, open-hearted, and joyous; *naïve* in all his expressions, rather inconsiderate, a mortal enemy of formality as also of drudgery, violent in his wishes and inclinations, and, as children are apt to be, a little suspicious and full of antipathies. . . . What I miss in him is the delicate sense for all the charming trifles of life, and for the finer expressions of beautiful sentiments, which often in little things spontaneously reveal the entire character. As he has a predilection for books with large type, so he also prefers men with large and strong

features. What is only tender and beautiful does not appeal to him, because, judging according to the analogy of his own nature, he regards everything as weak, if it is not strong and fiery."

The society of Berlin, at the time when Schlegel made his appearance there, was divided between numerous conflicting tendencies in morals, philosophy, and religion. On one side there was the sober, utilitarian life of the "Enlighteners," with whom poetry, religion, and even human passions were recognized only so far as they were useful, then there was the higher fashionable circle which gathered around the court, and in which religion possibly was worn as a holiday cloak on ecclesiastical occasions, but at other times abandoned to give place to licentiousness and coarse unrestraint. Half-way between these lay the society of the Jewish *salons*, where black-eyed Judiths and Rachels and Rebeccas, radiant with the beauty of their rich, Oriental womanhood, burned incense, somewhat indiscriminately, to every new candidate for literary laurels. Goethe was the idol of this *coterie*, Rahel Levin, later the wife of the diplomat, Varnhagen von Ense, having been one of the first to recognize the greatness of his genius; but besides Goethe they also worshipped Engel and Ramler and a dozen other ephemeral phenomena, whose very names have now dropped out of memory. Rahel was the social leader in this interesting sisterhood. Her universal sympathies and indifference to popular prejudice enabled her to play a prominent part

in the capital, and made her the intimate friend and confidante of two generations of literary celebrities. Acuteness of mind coupled with a certain intellectual voracity, defiance of the restraints which society imposes upon her sex—in short, all the peculiarities which made her circle so attractive to men of letters were combined and, as it were, concentrated into a type in her personality.

Here, in her house, all men, whatever their party, position, or intellectual predilections, met on neutral ground. Princes of the blood, and aristocratic snobs, here rubbed shoulders with literary bohemians, statesmen, and poets. All questions were debatable, provided they were debated with *esprit*. Everything was tolerated except dulness. The great problems of life and society were discussed, and no opinion, however extreme, gave offence, if defended with ability and knowledge. And this tolerance was not the result of indifference, but of an extraordinary hospitality to new ideas, eagerness to hear all sides, and a delight in the interchange of forceful and significant thought.

Rahel was not beautiful; nay, even as a young girl she was almost devoid of physical attractions. Nor did she seem to be supremely gifted. She was not a sparkling conversationalist. But she possessed a rare power of sympathy, and the faculty to make everyone who came in contact with her feel at his best. She always appealed to that which was highest in her interlocutor; and by her appreciation and the warm glow of her genial presence stimulated

him to a brilliancy which was, perhaps, ordinarily beyond him.

A man like Schlegel could not, of course, remain long in Berlin without drifting into this coterie, and the day when he was first introduced into Rahel's salon made an epoch in his life. It was here that he met Dorothea Veit, daughter of Lessing's friend, the famous Moses Mendelssohn, and wife of the Jewish banker Veit. This Dorothea, whose name, together with that of Rahel, henceforth appears on every page in the annals of the Romantic School, was, to say the least, a woman of unusual attainments. As a young girl of sixteen, she had, according to her father's wish, married the prosaic banker whose intellectual inferiority to herself, and indifference to literature, art, and all the things which her early training had taught her to worship and revere, must gradually have widened the gulf which already from the beginning separated them. Nevertheless their marriage had for many years preserved an outward show of harmony, and Dorothea was already the mother of two sons when her acquaintance with Schlegel suddenly called to life the slumbering dreams of her youth, and fanned the torpid passion of her nature into full blaze. Here was a man built, as it were, in a larger style than those whom she had been wont to meet ; a man, on the wide horizon of whose mind the future dawned with golden promise ; a man whose very faults and passions by their intensity assumed the dimensions of grandeur. Schlegel came, saw, and conquered. Never until

then had a woman made any lasting impression upon him ; he felt convinced that this was the one love of his life ; he knew that his love was returned ; he was furthermore aware that she was married, which does not seem to have caused him any serious scruples. He jumped at the conclusion that marriage was an irrational, immoral, and objectionable institution, which ought to be abolished. The result was what might have been expected. Veit closed his eyes as long as it was possible, and at last, when he learned that his wife neither asked nor desired his forgiveness, he consented to a separation. "Rejoice with me," Schlegel writes to his sister-in-law, "for now my life has a foundation and soil, a centre and a form. Now the most extraordinary things will be accomplished." In another letter to his brother he describes his beloved in the following manner : "She is a fine woman of genuine worth ; but she is quite simple, and has no thought for anything in the world except love, music, wit, and philosophy. In her arms I have found my youth again, and I can now no more reason it out of my life. . . . Even if I cannot make her happy, I can at least hope that the germ of happiness in her soul will thrive in the sunshine of my love, so that the mists which envelop it may no more be able to hinder its growth."

It was at this time that the first chapters of that much-praised and much-reviled romance, "Lucinde," were written, and if there were not too much proof to the contrary, we should prefer to believe that the

book was a pure fiction, and had not been suggested by the author's relation to Dorothea. The latter herself declared, when "Lucinde" was read to her, that "poets tell tales out of school." It seems almost inconceivable at the present day that a production so chaotic, so wildly extravagant, and so artistically feeble, could have made so much noise in a land and at a time which rejoiced in the living presence of poets like Goethe and Schiller.

The pervading sentiment of the book is one of contempt for all the prosy realities of life, and for all the rules and laws with which man has imprisoned his spirit, born for freedom. Julius, the hero, like all romantic heroes, is a gentleman of wealth and leisure. He is a *dilettante* in almost everything, and an artist by inclination but not by profession. His youthful excesses are described at great length; he is forever craving excitement, and when he can find nothing else to do, he feeds as it were on his own vitals, indulges in a sort of psychological vivisection, makes the minutest observations on each of his passing moods, registers the result, reasons over it, and philosophically accounts for it. This is the realization of that "beautiful self-reflection" which Schlegel in his first manifesto announced as being the essence of Romantic poetry. It is this same vein which Chateaubriand simultaneously worked with so much success in his "René" and which in a somewhat modified shape has found its representative in Byron's "Childe Harold." In fact, it is the prevailing mood of the age, which the

poets naturally were the more keenly conscious of, through the greater sensitiveness of their mental organism. Goethe had given it expression in "Werther," Jean Paul in "Roquairol," and Tieck in "William Lovell;" and henceforward the Romantic literature teems with dissolute, philosophic, and morbidly contemplative young men and maidens, who, without respect for moral or social obligations, live only to enjoy, and then, when the natural reaction succeeds the intoxication of the senses, strike tragically interesting attitudes before a mental mirror, and make profound observations on themselves in a carefully-kept journal, which the next day they read to an appreciative audience of intimate female friends. This, in brief outline, is the Romantic type, and a glance at the society of the day will easily convince one that the poets are not altogether responsible for its existence. Its most conspicuous features have even found their way into the philosophic systems of the time. What is, for instance, Fichte's "sovereign I," which creates the world out of the depths of its own consciousness, but a doctrinal embodiment of the Romantic defiance of law and social order? Again, no one will mistake the Romantic tendency of his *Wissenschaftslehre* (Doctrine of Science) when it deals with his favorite theme of self-contemplation. In order to understand the external phenomena of the world, which only exist in their relation to the subject or to his consciousness, he (the subject) must watch the *modus operandi* of his own mind. As Heine puts it,

the thought must listen to itself while it thinks. The philosophic thinker is like the monkey who took it into his head to boil his own tail. For, as he reasoned, the most refined art of cookery does not consist in crude objective boiling, but in the subjective consciousness of being boiled.

It is in the portrayal and analysis of these ever-shifting moods that the author of "Lucinde" has his *forte*. Here, for instance, is a piece of characterization which is drawn from experience: "A love without object burned within him (Julius) and consumed his heart. On the slightest provocation the flames of his passion blazed up. . . . His spirit was in a state of constant ferment; he was always expecting that something extraordinary was going to happen to him. Thus nothing could really have surprised him, and least of all his own destruction. Without any business or aim, he roamed about like a man who is anxiously seeking something on which he might risk his whole happiness. Everything excited, but nothing satisfied him. Hence it was that a dissipation only interested him as long as it was untried and unknown; there was as much scorn in his nature as levity. He could preserve his coolness in the midst of a sensual revel, and, as it were, studiously measure the enjoyment: but neither in this nor in the many fanciful studies and occupations, into which he plunged with youthful enthusiasm and a certain voracious hunger for knowledge, did he find that supreme bliss which his heart so vehemently demanded."

Then, at length, Julius makes the acquaintance of a woman, Lucinde, who, like himself, is an amateur in art, and who shares his contempt for the world with all its emptiness. "She lived," says the author, "not in this commonplace world, but in a world of her own imagining. She, too, had by one daring resolution thrown away all considerations and broken all bonds, and now lived in perfect freedom."

Now the veil suddenly falls from Julius's eyes, his art becomes warmer and more animated, and a life of brighter promise dawns before him. Lucinde loves him, and he too, after a fashion, loves her; that is to say, the feeling with which she inspires him affords him a new subject for study. For love, according to Schlegel, is not that sudden, spontaneous flowering of the soul, that impetuous, generous, and self-forgetful emotion which the romancers of all ages have delighted in picturing, but rather an empiric science, a curious medley of sensuality and speculative philosophy, with a slight admixture of tenderness.

In justice to the author we must remark that in his own life his heart put his intellect to shame. He never wavered in his devotion to the woman who for his sake had braved the judgment of the world and exchanged a life of ease and luxury for one of vain and aimless wanderings. Their love, in spite of its lawlessness, was its own law, and needed, according to their own testimony, no social statute to shield it; for it rested on the sure foundation of real kinship of soul. It was not until many years

after they had joined their fates together, when persecution and want had quelled their revolutionary ardor, that they suffered their union to be sanctioned by the church. Then their social ostracism was at an end, Schlegel obtained a position in Vienna, and Dorothea could again show her face in the company of virtuous matrons.

The book fell like a bombshell into the peaceful circles of Berlin society. An open attack upon the holy institution of marriage and an undisguised avowal of the doctrine of free-love could not fail to arouse the indignation of those whose office it was to guard the public morality. Schlegel was hunted from place to place; in Göttingen the authorities refused him entrance to the city. In Berlin he was notified that, if he attempted to lecture, the police would interfere, and even in the academic halls of the University of Jena, where he disputed for his degree of Ph.D., he was overwhelmed with invective and abuse. No doubt he had the satisfaction of believing himself a martyr for a good cause, and Dorothea, whose enthusiastic faith in his greatness never flagged, did her best to uphold him in this conviction. To be sure, her womanly instincts were too fine not to make her at times doubt the expediency of "Lucinde's" publication; in fact, we learn from a letter of hers to Schleiermacher that she rather regretted that her Friedrich had written the book; but if Schleiermacher had ventured to agree with her, we dare say that she would have promptly retracted her opinion. "In regard to 'Lucinde,'"

she writes, "I often shudder with cold, and then again burn with shame, to see that which to me was the most secret and the most holy exposed to the view of curious and hostile men. In vain he tries to strengthen me by the thought that you would have been even bolder than he. It is not the boldness which frightens me. Nature celebrates the adoration of the Most High in open temples and over the whole world—but love?"

In Rahel's coterie "*Lucinde*" naturally excited the liveliest interest. The tone of this society had always been of the freest, and its members, carried away by the fervor and æsthetic susceptibility of their temperaments, had often strayed beyond what the Philistine world regarded as the boundary-line of propriety. Their characters had, to begin with, been further removed from prudery than moralists might have deemed desirable; and now came Schlegel with his "*Lucinde*," and the last remnant of the veil of Isis was torn away. Women like Rahel, whose lives and conduct were above reproach, had sudden attacks of artistic depravity, and there was not a thing in heaven or on earth which they blushed to discuss. They were convinced that "*Lucinde*" was destined to revolutionize society and establish a freer relation between the sexes; and for the time being it really seemed as if the prophecy was to be fulfilled. The intellectual women of the day especially showed a great willingness to break the ancient fetters. Schlegel's definition of marriage as "devotion unfettered" was joyfully received.

Schleiermacher, then minister of the Charité Church in Berlin, cherished a profound admiration for the Jewess Henriette, the wife of the physician Herz, one of the chief ornaments of Rahel's circle. Henriette cordially returned his sentiments of affection and regard, and their relation soon ripened into the most intimate friendship. Here, indeed, we find a realization, not of the relation which "Lucinde" deals with, but of a far higher and nobler one, which the author of "Lucinde" would have been incapable of comprehending. Henriette, according to the testimony of contemporaries, was a woman of magnificent form and stature, and bore a resemblance to one of Titian's most beautiful heads. Her character was proud, with perhaps a touch of defiance; her impressible yet vigorous mind could grasp and retain the most abstruse ideas; her culture was broad and many-sided; her command of picturesque language, and her dialectic skill, as her published correspondence with Schleiermacher testifies, were truly marvellous. And yet her attitude toward her friend is so womanly! She clothes his abstract speculations in a bodily form, as it were, and imparts to them the warm flush of her own intense and sympathetic nature. No wonder that he who had half-jocosely expressed his desire "to take a course in womanliness" became gradually more and more dependent upon her, rejoiced in the intellectual stimulus her society afforded him, and confided to her the most secret thoughts and desires of his heart. Schleiermacher was a singularly pure-

mind and unsophisticated man, and when ignoble whispers concerning his relation to Henriette began to reach his ears, he showed a sincere surprise, and even attempted to justify himself. Not so with her ; she had known from the very beginning what she risked by accepting his friendship, but she had calmly decided that he was worth more to her than the opinion of the world.

The account of their studies, mutual confessions, doubts, and resolutions, preserved in their own correspondence and in that of their friends, giving us a glimpse of two beautiful and original characters, is one of the most fascinating chapters which the history of the Romantic School has to show. The only doubt which harasses us, the only question which remains unanswered is, how Dr. Hertz bore this seeming neglect of himself, and whether he sanctioned his wife's intimacy with the æsthetic clergyman. But there was revolution in the air, and it was rather the fashion to shock one's fellow-men ; so Dr. Hertz, knowing his own inferiority to his wife, probably accepted the inevitable.

That Schleiermacher himself, however, was occasionally in the dark regarding the nature of his feelings toward Henriette, the following extract from a letter to his sister, in spite of its confident tone, sufficiently proves : "You are afraid of relations of tenderness and intimacy with persons of the other sex, and no doubt you are right ; to keep watch over myself is my constant endeavor ; I call myself to account for the most trifling thing. I be-

long to Henriette's existence ; passion will ever be excluded from our friendship, for it has already endured the most decisive tests. It is deeply implanted in my nature that I can become more closely attached to women than to men ; for there is so much in me which only a woman can understand. I must, then, if I will not renounce a true friendship, remain standing on this otherwise dangerous point. In regard to what you write about the appearance, I have my own *principles* on that subject ; I believe that it is plainly a part of my office to despise it. It is my simple *duty*."

In another letter he makes the discovery that, if he could have married Henriette, it would have been nearly an ideal marriage ; the only objection, aside from the fact that it is an impossibility, is that their wedded life would have been rather too harmonious.

It is difficult to decide whether it was Schleiermacher's desire to justify himself in the eyes of the world, or a disinterested friendship for Schlegel, which induced him to enter the lists and break a lance in defence of "Lucinde." At all events, considering his social position as preacher of the gospel in the Prussian capital, it was a most audacious thing for him to do. In his confidential letters on "Lucinde," addressed to three female friends, in one of whom the public recognized his Henriette, he boldly attacks the prudish insincerity of the age, which took a secret delight in the lascivious romances of Wieland, and gloated over the coarse

platitudes of Lafontaine,¹ while it cried out in virtuous horror at the immorality of Schlegel, who, dealing with essentially the same thing, had the courage to call it by its right name.

We might select a dozen more instances from the private and public life of the Romanticists, showing that the school in its early rebellion against the prejudices of society went to the opposite extreme, and methodically arranged as a new system of ethics what had hitherto been regarded as abnormal phases of human intercourse. Amid a great deal of youthful folly, amid a great deal that was accidental, extravagant, and purely personal, there was also sufficient talent, earnestness, and justice on the side of the iconoclasts to insure a certain degree of success, and a sufficient amount of immorality, hollowness, and irreligion among the adherents of the old to lend a shadow of justice to the rebellion. Schlegel, who, like many another young man, mistook his own personal peculiarities for universal laws, and the momentary cravings of his heart for the voice of humanity, was unfortunately during this period the spokesman, and, to the eyes of the world, the public representative of Romanticism. His mind was so constituted that even the simplest truism, as soon as he attempted to utter it, assumed the shape of a paradox. It was in the nature of the case, then, that when he defended a proposition which in itself closely bordered on the paradoxical,

¹ A popular German novelist; not the Frenchman of the same name.

it assumed the most monstrous dimensions, and frightened even those who were half-inclined to agree with him. In his glorification of the *ἐραίραι*, "the free women of Greece," the Romantic paradox of marriage culminated.

"All marriages," he writes, "are nothing but concubinages, morganatic marriages, or, rather, provisional attempts at marriage. . . . The domestic man clings to the hearth where he gets his food; gradually, as he ripens, he begins to strike root like a plant, and renounces the foolish wish to move about according to pleasure, until at length he becomes a fossil. Man in his civic aspect is a machine, . . . the individual as the whole multitude. He feeds, marries, grows old, and leaves children behind him, and so on *ad infinitum*. To live merely for the sake of living is the real source of all vulgarity. . . . According to the idea of the ancients, the nobility of human nature should prevail in man as well as in woman. The character of the race should be predominant over the diverging qualities of the sexes. In modern society the very opposite is the case. We can never represent a woman sufficiently weak and womanly, and we take it for granted that she must be so. This view has the most injurious effect upon those artistic representations which are meant to be ideal. We include in our idea of woman features which are merely derived from experience. . . . In Athens, where the public judgment was equally far removed from silly prudery and from lawless indifference, where only

what was evil was improper, where there were none of those prejudices which with barbarians take the place of moral feeling, there the wisest man of his age (Socrates) could engage in conversation with a frivolous priestess of joy. . . . This peculiar position of woman in Greece is justified by the endeavor to refine manhood as well as womanhood into the higher unit of humanity (*Menschlichkeit*). . . . What we moderns call womanliness is nothing but a total lack of character. The Greeks made the mistake of placing their ideal, cultivated, free women outside of the social order of morality ; we moderns make a far greater mistake in altogether separating ideality and all kindred qualities from our idea of woman."

Some later essays on similar subjects are openly addressed to Dorothea, and in these the author brings his heaviest artillery into the field. But I must forbear to quote, especially as I do not wish to take the responsibility of deciding whether Schlegel, in his last conclusions, was really in earnest. He ends with asking whether, as an experiment, a marriage *en quatre* would not be a good thing. Here the paradox indeed reaches the dangerous point, where it threatens to topple over and crush its own foundation.

XII.

NOVALIS AND THE BLUE FLOWER

GERMAN Romanticism is generally characterized as being a retrogressive movement, an attempted revival of feudalism and a reaction toward Catholicism. A Romanticist, in the modern acceptation of the term, is a man who places himself in a hostile attitude toward the progressive spirit of the age, and tries by artificial means to revive "the good old times." That the phase of Romanticism represented by Friedrich Schlegel and Schleiermacher in the early stages of their careers was anything but Catholic or conservative, my former article on this subject must have sufficiently proved. The man who gave the strongest religious impulse to the school, and whose character more nearly approaches our present idea of the Romantic type, was Friedrich von Hardenberg, more commonly known by the *nom de plume* Novalis.

Who does not know Heine's story of the young girl, sister of the postmistress near Göttingen, who read consumption out of Novalis's romance, "Heinrich von Ofterdingen?" It may seem irrelevant in this connection, but nevertheless it conveys an idea

of a certain subtle quality in this author's genius which a more direct critical analysis might fail to detect. Novalis was one of those whom death had early marked for its own. A hectic flush burned upon his cheeks, his exquisitely chiselled lips indicated extreme sensitiveness, and his large blue eyes, whose gaze appeared to be turned inward, shone with a deep, unearthly lustre. Even the one strong passion of his life, his love for the twelve-year-old child, Sophie von Kühn, seems to have been a kind of ethereal, sexless feeling, a mere poetic devotion, purged of the earthy element which clings to the passions of men. No one will wonder that the poetry springing from such a relation lacks that virile quality and that robust health which characterize the lyrics of poets like Goethe, or even Schiller before he had drunk too deeply of Kantian philosophy. Nevertheless, the verses of Novalis have a vague, spiritual, not to say phantasmal beauty of their own; they fascinate by their very strangeness; their fleeting perfume lures the sense by its very deftness in evading its grasp; they gleam with that "light that never was on sea or land;" they move onward with a delicious, subdued splendor of cadence that falls upon the ear like melodious whispers from distant fairy realms. Excelling as they do in rhythmical effects and tuneful transitions rather than in strength of thought and splendor of imagination, they baffle the translator's art. It would be as easy for a flower-painter to bind the perfume of the lily to his canvas as for a translator to transfer the fleeting

beauty of Novalis's songs into a foreign tongue. An attempt has been made by an English writer,* but he who knows the *Spiritual Songs* in the original will keenly feel the shortcomings of the English renderings.

The early education of Novalis was calculated to develop the mystic tendencies of his nature. His father, a stern, grave man of commanding appearance, belonged to the so-called *Hernhutters*, or *Moravian Brethren*, a sect which, without essentially differing from Lutheran orthodoxy in its doctrinal tenets, censured the laxity of its moral discipline and demanded a return to the early Christian simplicity of life. Tieck, who as a friend of Novalis visited his home, has given a quaint and interesting account of the daily life of the family. "The old *Hardenberg*," says he, "stood like a patriarch among his gifted sons and his amiable daughters. . . . He praised and loved the much-abused old times, and whenever he had an opportunity he boldly expressed his views or flared up in sudden indignation." At certain times, Tieck further relates, the father was in the habit of testing the orthodoxy of his children, and then stormy scenes were of no infrequent occurrence. Once, on hearing a great noise in the next room, Tieck anxiously asked the servant what had happened. "Nothing," was the careless answer, "it is only the master giving religious instruction."

At the University of Jena, Novalis made the ac-

* George Macdonald.

quaintance of Schiller, whose "Robbers" and "Don Carlos" had filled him with an ardent love and reverence for their author. Schiller, who at once recognized the extraordinary talents of the young man, took a very kindly interest in him, gave him the benefit of his advice and instruction, and even for several years kept up a correspondence with him. Novalis's letters, which have been published among his posthumous papers, read more like the passionate effusions of a young maiden to her lover than the communications of a scholar to his teacher; he nearly exhausts the vocabulary of his native tongue in trying to find words strong enough to convey his unbounded homage and admiration. But Novalis was of a sympathetic and affectionate nature, and moreover he was a poet and a German. For him the step from the poem to the poet's personality was a short one. He feels the same kind of personal friendship and attachment for Homer as he does for Schiller. The Wolfian theory does not in the least disturb him. "Oh," he exclaims, "if I could but fall upon the neck of the singer of the 'Odyssey,' and hide my blushing face in the thick, venerable beard of the worthy old man!"

His intercourse with Friedrich Schlegel opened Novalis's eyes to the greatness of Goethe, and when, in the spring of 1795, "Wilhelm Meister" appeared, "the great Pagan" threatened to gain the place in his affections which had hitherto belonged to Schiller. Schlegel had in his usual paradoxical way declared that "'Wilhelm Meister,' Fichte's Doctrine of

Science, and the French Revolution were the greatest phenomena of the century ;" and Novalis, whose flexible mind was at this time strongly influenced by his aggressive friend, readily subscribed to this verdict. "Fichte and Goethe" became the watchword of both, and the constant theme of their conversation. The idealism of Fichte they still further idealized, and the freedom from moral restraints which characterizes Goethe's romance they pushed even beyond the boundary line which the liberal author had fixed. But the radicalism of Novalis, which is, no doubt, chiefly attributable to his association with Schlegel, was of short duration. The death of his betrothed, Sophie, who was then fifteen years old, dispelled these intellectual vagaries and plunged him back into his native mysticism. His sorrow knew no bounds ; for three days and nights he shut himself up in his room and wept, then moved to Tennstadt, where she was buried, and sat at her grave, brooding over his loss. Darkness closed around him, the light of day seemed odious to him, and the scenes of life passed like a horrible, meaningless pageant before his eyes. The thought of suicide haunted him, and he was on the verge of despair, when at length Sophie, yielding to his prayers, appeared to him in a vision and brought him comfort. Then his old gift of song came to his rescue ; although not altogether abandoning the thought of death, he still resolved to live, and his sorrow gained a voice in a series of poems entitled "Hymns to the Night." "If I have hitherto lived in

the present," he writes, "and in the hope of earthly happiness, I must now live altogether in the real future, in my faith in God and immortality. It will be very difficult to me to separate myself from this world which I have studied with so much affection; frequent relapses will bring me many a sorrowful moment, but I know that there is a power in man which by assiduous care can be developed into a remarkable energy."

Again, speaking of Sophie's death: "The flower-petal has been wafted over into the other world. The reckless player throws up his hand and smiles, as if awakened from a dream, listening to the last call of the watchman, and waiting for the glow of the morning which shall rouse him to renewed life in the world of reality."

But this first glow of the morning is long coming; and long the poet waits in vain. Nevertheless, in the midst of his grief, when the violent emotion might be expected to banish all thought of self, his attitude is that of a true Romanticist. His self-consciousness never for a moment leaves him; his eye is constantly turned inward, and its keen sight penetrates into the darkest chambers of his mind. With a half-psychological, half-poetical interest he watches the *crescendos* and *diminuendos* of his emotions, records in his journal the results of his observations, and upbraids himself whenever a note of natural, worldly joy mingles in the transcendental harmonies of his soul. He stimulates his grief by artificial means in order to keep it up to the proper

pitch. If Novalis had not from his earliest youth breathed the air of philosophical abstraction, and if he had not lived in an age which was universally afflicted with this habit of morbid introspection, we might be justified in regarding these delicately retouched negatives of his mental states as insincere and affected. But a deeper knowledge of Novalis's character excludes such a supposition; he was, in the truest sense of the word, a child of his time, and it is perhaps the best proof of his sincerity that he followed it in its extravagances, shared its infirmities, and respected its limitations.

The "Hymns to the Night" open with an apostrophe in prose to "the all-rejoicing light with its colors, its rays, its undulations, its gentle omnipresence, as awakening day." Then the poet turns to "the holy, inexpressible, mysterious night," in whose darkness he beholds "the memories and wishes of his youth, the dreams of his childhood, the brief joys and vain hopes of his whole life, marching before him, draped in gray garments like mists of the evening when the sun has set." His beloved is hidden in the impenetrable night; therefore he loves the night better than the day. "Embrace with spirit passion my body," he exclaims, "that I may become more inwardly blended with thee, and that my bridal night may last forever."

A mixture of sensuous pleasure with high religious raptures gives a curious interest to these hymns of Novalis. It is as if this earthly body which he is resolved to renounce and to mortify, in

spite of him, again and again asserted its rights; as if his spiritual nature struggled desperately to break loose from the trammels of the flesh, and in the ardor of the combat gathered strength to rise to loftier flights. But this forcible heightening of every sensation, these endless distorted attitudes of ecstasy and despair, indicate a state of mental disease. Novalis seems himself to have been aware that his was not the normal condition of humanity, but this does not disturb him. The Romantic poet, according to Friedrich Schlegel's manifesto, knows no law except his own sovereign will, and where he differs from the rest of humanity, the presumption is that humanity is in the wrong. Thus Novalis also performs a series of philosophical somersaults, and ends with the conclusion that disease is preferable to health. For "life," he says, "is a disease of the spirit."

A volume of fragments, published under the title of "Flower Dust" (*Blüthenstaub*) contains numerous abstruse speculations on these same subjects, of life and death, health and disease, pain and pleasure, etc. There is no obscure region of the soul which the mystic poet has not attempted to explore, there is no human emotion so ethereal and fleeting as to evade his search, and no object in heaven or on earth too mean or too exalted for his earnest interest and consideration. Here we find a striking aphorism embodying some homely truth, in the next paragraph a conjecture as to the nature of the divine trinity, and a few lines further on some mere per-

sonal item, a literary project, a sigh of regret and resignation, or a half subdued sob for the death of the beloved.

The author has himself fairly estimated the value of these fragments when he says :

"The art of writing books has not yet been discovered, but it is on the point of being discovered. Fragments of this kind are literary seed-corn. There may be many a barren grain among them, however, if only some will sprout. . . ."

From the whole number, amounting to upward of a thousand, we select the following for translation :

"Goethe is the true steward of the poetic spirit on earth."

"Poetry is absolute reality. This is the kernel of my philosophy. The more poetic the truer."

"Every Englishman is an island."

"There is a possibility of an infinite delight in pain."

"Whatever I will do, that I can do. With man nothing is impossible."

"Pain should properly be the normal state, and joy should be what now sorrow and pain are."

"Religion cannot be preached except as love and patriotism."

"The republic is the *fluidum deferens* of youth. Wherever there are young people, there is a republic. By marriage the system changes. The married man demands order, security, and rest ; he seeks the genuine monarchy."

"Death is the Romantic principle of life. Death is life. Through death life is intensified."

"The epigram is the central monad of old French literature and culture."

"Coals and diamonds are one and the same substance. And still how different! Is there not just the same difference between man and woman? We are the homely charcoal; the women are opals and sapphires, which likewise are nothing but coals."

"A marriage is a political epigram. An epigram is only an elementary poetic expression—a poetic element—a primitive poem."

"Love is the end and goal of universal history—the *amen* of the universe."

"Klopstock's works give the impression of being free translations of some unknown poet by a very talented but unpoetical philologist."

"Very properly do many women speak of *sinking* into the arms of their husbands. Happy she who can *rise* into the embrace of her lover."

"Can an ego suppose itself an ego without another ego or non-ego?"

"Love is the highest reality, and the first cause. All romances which deal with true love are fairy tales, magic narratives."

"To become a man is an art."

We learn from Tieck that these fragments, many of which were written only for the author's own amusement and without a view to publication, are the first crude beginnings of a great encyclopædic work, in which facts and speculations drawn from

all departments of human knowledge should mutually explain and support each other. It is safe to assert, however, that Novalis, even if he had lived to the age of a patriarch, would have been poorly equipped for such an undertaking.

Without an acquaintance with the leading philosophical systems of Germany, and especially that of Fichte, the greater part of Novalis's prose writings will appear obscure and unintelligible. And their obscurity does not always, as Carlyle would have us believe, prove that the thought which is struggling for utterance is too profound to be embodied in the common vernacular of cultivated men, but is as frequently the result of a confusion of ideas in the author's mind. It is truly to be regretted that a man in whom there dwelt so rich a fountain of song should have spent so great a portion of his life in unprofitable investigations regarding "the internal plural," or the relation of mathematics to the emotional life of man. It may be that occasionally he caught glimpses of truths too high for the comprehension of men of coarser fibre, but it is as certain that his speculations often lost themselves in vague abstractions and pedantic sophistries. As a curiosity we quote in the original the following untranslatable passage, which, if it means anything, certainly does not bear its meaning on the surface:

"Wir sind gar nicht Ich, wir können und sollen aber Ich werden, wir sind Keime zum Ich-Werden. Wir sollen Alles in ein Du, in ein zweites Ich ver-

wandeln ; nur dadurch erheben wir uns zum groszen Ich das Eins und Alles zugleich ist."

We comprehend that these utterances, although clothed in the phraseology of Fichte, have been suggested by, or at least have something to do with, Spinoza's doctrine of the mere relative existence of all finite things when compared to the one "absolute existence," God. No doubt Novalis was an ingenious *dilettante* in philosophy, and perhaps divined a profounder meaning in the systems of his day than even the founders themselves ; but the world has outgrown many an elaborate philosophic structure in this century, and will doubtless outgrow many more. But of its true poets mankind can afford to forget none ; and when the philosopher Novalis shall long have been forgotten, the poet Novalis may yet survive.

If we had been writing a romantic fiction, instead of a biographical sketch, we could never have invented a series of more pathetic events than those which mark the closing years of this author's life. He had coquetted so long with death, that death at last took the matter in earnest, placed its hand upon his shoulder, and bade him keep himself in readiness for the final summons. But never had this earth appeared more beautiful to the poet than just then ; never had the quickening tide of life pulsed more vigorously through his veins, never had the future dawned upon him with such golden promise. He loved again, and this time not a child, but a charming maiden in the first flower of her womanhood,

who in return had bestowed upon him all the affection of her heart. Moreover, he had been appointed assessor of the Thuringian mines, and rejoiced in the prospect of a useful activity in his chosen field of labor. His literary fame was spreading, and that first recognition which is so dear to a young author's heart had come to him from a source which made it tenfold sweet and delightful. The poet Tieck, whose popular tales (*Volksmärchen*) he had long ardently admired, sought him at this time, and their very first meeting laid the foundation of a warm friendship, which during the few years they were allowed to remain together shed a softly brightening lustre over the lives of both. "My acquaintance with you," writes Novalis, "opens a new chapter in my life. . . . No one has ever appealed to me so gently and still so universally as you. Every word from you I understand perfectly. In no point do I meet you only from afar. Nothing human is foreign to you ; you take an interest in everything, and your spirit diffuses itself like a perfume over all objects, and still lingers most lovingly with the flowers."

It was, no doubt, the association with Tieck which counteracted Schlegel's influence, and induced Novalis to relinquish his philosophical speculations and henceforth devote himself exclusively to poetry. In the meanwhile his illness, which he had so often apostrophized in prose and verse, was gradually undermining his strength, but the nearer the end approached, the more tenaciously he clung to this

life, which had once appeared but a heavy burden and an endless sorrow. His æsthetic convictions also underwent radical changes. The sensuous equilibrium, the sunny realism which once had attracted him in Goethe, now disgusted and repelled him. The shimmering moonshine, the forest solitude, the wonder-blossoms, and all the magic machinery of Tieck seemed to embody the essence of poetic art, and the nebulous mysticism in the theosophic meditations of Jacob Böhme completely won his heart. "Wilhelm Meister," his former ideal of a romance, he finds "altogether prosaic and modern." It is merely a domestic tale, which, where it does not ignore the wonderful, treats it as the enthusiastic extravagance of youth. Artistic atheism, he thinks, is the spirit of the book. In order to enter his protest against these pernicious teachings he determines to write a romance which shall express the very opposite sentiments. A theme well adapted to embody his own poetic creed he had discovered some time before in the history of the minnesinger Heinrich von Ofterdingen. He communicated his plan to Tieck, whose sympathetic interest stimulated his mind to increased activity, in spite of the growing weakness of his body. In his predilection for the Middle Ages Tieck had himself been Novalis's predecessor, and to him belongs, next to Goethe, the honor of having directed a nation, whose literature had long fed on foreign spoils, to its own historic past as a source of poetic inspiration. Mediæval life, with its sharp distinctions of caste, and, moreover, lacking many of

the levelling and equalizing agencies of our own age, offered larger types of men, a bolder grouping of scenes, and a wider scope to a picturesque fancy. That childlike trust in a Divine Father, that sublime disregard of the world with all its allurements, that strong religious fervor which stirred with one grand impulse the hearts of the mightiest king and the lowliest beggar, and drove great nations away from their hearths to perish in the unknown deserts of the Orient—traits like these, with all the imposing historic drama which they brought into action, will always have the power to set the poet's pulses throbbing. It had been the custom during the period of the Enlightenment, as it is largely at the present day, to sneer at the religious rapture of the Crusades and call it morbid, theatrical, etc. ; to scoff at the *naïve* directness of mediæval art, and to regard the few monuments of Old German literature which time has spared as the rude stammerings of a barbarous age. The mistake which every century has made, that of judging its predecessors by its own standard, was at that time the more to be regretted, because undoubtedly it occasioned the final loss of many valuable manuscripts which perhaps a little antiquarian skill or curiosity might have preserved. The opinion of Frederick the Great concerning the "*Nibelungenlied*," that it was not worth a pinch of snuff, and that he would not tolerate such stuff in his library, is well known ; but that the king, both in his ignorance and in his ill-nature, fairly represented the attitude of his time toward

the Middle Ages ought by no means to be regarded as a daring assertion. Not long ago M. Taine exemplified the same tendency in his brilliant lectures on "The Philosophy of Art," and the reader hardly knows which ought to surprise him the more, the total inability of the Gaul to comprehend the Gothic character, or the complacent arrogance with which the nineteenth century behaves toward its less enlightened precursors.

The Romantic poets, with Tieck and Novalis in their van, erred on the very opposite side. Guided not by the light of reason, but by a dim poetic instinct, they groped their way in the twilight through the "corridors of time," and, rummaging about in the lumber-rooms of the past, they discovered, among much that was of value, a good deal of rubbish which might as well have remained in obscurity. They admired not only the picturesque pomp and splendor of feudalism, but also its system of caste, its club law, and its oppression of the lower classes; not only the primitive simplicity of faith and the intensity of emotional life in the early Catholic Church, but also its intolerance, its hostility to liberty, and its idolatrous Madonna worship. The paradisiacal state of the world, according to them, lay in the past; since the Crusades mankind had been steadily degenerating. They accordingly demanded of their own nation a return to this ideal state, and upbraided it because it could no more feel and think and believe as it had done in its childhood. As Heine says, they resembled the aged

chambermaid in the fairy tale, who, having discovered that her mistress renewed her youth by means of an elixir, put the flagon to her mouth and emptied the whole contents. She not only regained her youth, but became an infant in the cradle. If the Enlighteners had erred in despising their mediæval ancestors because, judged by the standard of the eighteenth century, they were rude and ignorant, the Romanticists committed a no less grievous error in measuring their contemporaries by the long disused standards of the past.

Novalis's romance, "*Heinrich von Ofterdingen*," being a true product of the Romantic soil, shares the extravagances and imperfections which characterize Tieck's early works, and indeed all works of a similar nature within the school. It teems with sub-plots and allegories within allegories, and at times, it must be confessed, tasks the reader's patience to the utmost; for the very moment he imagines that he has caught hold of a tangible thread and is determined to keep it, it somehow slips out of his fingers, and he is again lost in a dimly lighted labyrinth, filled, it is true, with many beautiful things, but leading nowhere, without end and without beginning. As has already been remarked, the book was written as a protest against "*Wilhelm Meister*," and as the latter, according to Novalis, was a glorification of the prose of life, so "*Heinrich von Ofterdingen*" should be an apotheosis of its poetry. But poetry the Romanticists conceived to be of a vague, ethereal, and impalpable essence, which impressed the sense not

through the grosser faculty of understanding, but according to some mysterious law appealing directly to the deepest emotions of the heart. This theory, which the author shared with Schlegel and Tieck, is no doubt largely responsible for the confusion which reigns in his tale. Singular enough, and apparently conflicting with the above theory, is the fact that the lyrical poems which are found scattered through the story are by far the clearest and most intelligible part of it; but Novalis was primarily a lyric poet, and nature will not fail to assert itself in spite of all theories.

To unravel the many allegorical complications of the plot is no easy task. Novalis has, however, given us a clew. In the first part, he says, the hero is matured as a poet, and in the second (which was left incomplete at the author's death) he is glorified as a poet. (In the very first chapter we meet with all the conventional machinery of Romantic fiction: night, moonlight, dreams, and the longing for the blue flower. This blue flower is the watchword and the sacred symbol of the school. It is meant to symbolize the deep and nameless longings of a poet's soul. Romantic poetry invariably deals with longing; not a definite, formulated desire for some attainable object, but a dim, mysterious aspiration, a trembling unrest, a vague sense of kinship with the infinite, and a consequent dissatisfaction with every form of happiness which the world has to offer. The object of the Romantic longing, therefore, so far as it has any object, is the ideal—the ideal of happiness, the

ideal of womanhood, the ideal of social perfection, etc. The blue flower, like the absolute ideal, is never found in this world; poets may at times dimly feel its nearness, and perhaps even catch a brief glimpse of it in some lonely forest glade, far from the haunts of men, but it is vain to try to pluck it. If for a moment its perfume fills the air, the senses are intoxicated, and the soul swells with poetic rapture.

In "Heinrich von Ofterdingen" the presence of this wondrous flower is felt on every page, and quite unawares one may catch a glimpse of its fragile chalice. "I long to see the blue flower," are the very first words which the hero utters; "it is continually in my mind, and I can think of nothing else." He falls asleep and has a strange dream, also of the blue flower, the significance of which is heightened by the fact that his father had dreamed something similar as he was about to take the most important step of his life. Heinrich starts with his mother and a company of merchants for Augsburg, where he is to visit his maternal grandfather. Every new object which meets his eye fills him with wonder. The conversation of his companions, in which he himself eagerly participates, is intended to enlarge his views of life and mature him for his future calling. It strikes one, however, as singular that mediæval merchants should be constantly talking about art and poetry, and it seems as if the author had wilfully violated reality when, for instance, he makes them speak in chorus. Historical truth

and local coloring are of course out of the question. The miner, the hermit, Zulma, Klingsohr, etc., are all bloodless and sexless abstractions, and are probably intended by the author as poetic personifications of certain forces of nature or of history. Zulma is the spirit of the Orient, the miner represents the poetry of nature, the hermit that of history, and in Klingsohr we meet the embodiment of the ideal, fully developed poet. In spite of his professed dislike of "*Wilhelm Meister*," Novalis has, perhaps unconsciously, echoed Goethe's sentiments in the æsthetic discourses of this ideal poet. The spiritual supremacy of "the great Pagan" makes itself felt even in a work whose purpose it was to protest against it. At the sight of Klingsohr's daughter, Mathilde, Heinrich has the same sensation as he had had in the dream when he saw the blue flower. He loves her, and his love is returned; but at the very moment when the mysterious flower seems to be within the reach of his hand, it is lost to him. Mathilde is drowned in the river—an event which Heinrich had anticipated in his dreams; and stunned with grief and despairing of his own future, he leaves Augsburg to seek the imperial court. And now the author unfolds his transcendental wings and henceforth disdains to preserve even the semblance of probability. The hero hears voices of song coming apparently from a tree growing at the road-side. He recognizes the voice of Mathilde, who promises to send him another maiden, Cyane, to comfort him. Then he has

a strange allegorical vision, and the mysterious maiden suddenly stands before him, and immediately gains his love. Whether this Cyane really is Mathilde, or only a phantom representing her, or an altogether independent individuality, is a point which we are unable to settle. There are passages in the story which seem to prove that each of these assumptions is equally probable. In a cave, called the Cave of the Count of Hohenzollern, Heinrich sees wonderful signs and symbols which are supposed to hide the secrets of his fate, and in a monastery, the inhabitants of which are not living men, but spirits whose vocation it is "to preserve the sacred fire in young minds," he receives instruction concerning the mysteries of life and death. The rest of the tale is only lightly sketched and abounds in mysteries, allegories, and metamorphoses, compared with which Sindbad the Sailor or *The Forty Thieves* appear as reasonable as an algebraic problem. Heinrich plucks the blue flower, and in the end is united with Mathilde. The boundary between this world and the world to come vanishes; time, space, logic, all disappear under the magic wand of the poet; all are but relative existences which are absorbed in the one absolute existence—poetry.

Considered as a story this romance of Novalis may have very little importance, but regarded as a phenomenon in literature, containing the germs of various tendencies of a school which during the present century has spread throughout Europe, it

is well worthy of the attention we have given it. That "Heinrich von Ofterdingen," in spite of its mystic coloring and its visionary extravagances, is largely autobiographical, is easily seen; the character of the hero, being so nearly identical with that of the author himself, the death of his first beloved, the vision at the road-side, the vague, restless longing for the blue flower, the second betrothal, etc., belong as much to the history of the modern poet Novalis as to that of the mediæval hero of the romance. The poets of the eighteenth century, having seldom any practical aim to distract them from the contemplation of their own inner life, have more frequently than the poets of other ages apotheosized themselves in the persons of their heroes. The contempt of life and the disgust with the world (*Weltschmerz*, as the Germans call it) which directly result from morbid self-analyses are not yet developed in Novalis. On the contrary, he studies nature with real affection, and takes a sincere interest in his fellow-men. But as a Romantic poet he is an absolute sovereign who brooks no law above him, and the laws of reality have no validity to him except as symbols of a higher order of creation which the poet, in moments of inspiration, may behold.

This exaltation of the poet above the rest of his kind, this assumption of the office of a prophet, priest, and inspired seer, and the kindred claims to exemption from the rules of morals which govern ordinary men, are dominant features of the Romantic School.

The religious mysticism and the consequent predilection for the Catholic Church which so strikingly characterized the later phases of Romantic development received its first impulse from Tieck's friend, Wackenroder, but was hardly recognized as a distinct feature of the school until the days of Novalis. With Wackenroder the interest had been chiefly an artistic one; with Novalis it sprang from a real, deeply felt want of the heart. His fervid spirit demanded a warmer, intenser, and more picturesque faith than the rationalistic Lutheranism of his times afforded. The reading of Schleiermacher's famous "Orations on Religion" awakened in him a desire to serve the same good cause; he accordingly wrote an essay on "Europe and Christianity," which he read in manuscript to an enthusiastic circle of friends in Jena. Tieck and Friedrich Schlegel were delighted, but Dorothea had her misgivings as to its merits. "Christianity is *à l'ordre du jour* here," she writes. "The gentlemen are a little cracked; Tieck carries religion to the same length as Schiller does fate."

In fact this attempt of Novalis to glorify the "only saving Church" is one of the most paradoxical documents which the Romantic literature has to show. It was accepted by Schlegel for *The Athenæum*, but Goethe, from a sincere friendship for the author, prevented its publication. It was not until several years after Novalis's death that it was given to the public. The essay represents the Reformation as an unqualified evil, because it destroyed the unity of the Church; it also justifies the Madonna worship

by the conscious craving in every human heart for a female ideal of Divinity, a theme which receives frequent attention in the "Spiritual Songs" and the "Fragments." The homage, however, which he pays "the divine Virgin and Mother" seems to be the adoration of a lover rather than that of a religious votary.

"Ich sehe dich in tausend Bildern
Maria, lieblich ausgedrückt,
Doch keins von allen kann dich schildern
Wie meine Seele dich erblickt.
Ich weisz nur dasz der Welt Getümmel
Seitdem mir wie ein Traum verweht
Und ein unnennbar süszer Himmel
Mir ewig im Gemüthe steht."

Among the works of Novalis there still remains a fragment of a romance, entitled "The Disciples at Saïs." It was written before "Heinrich von Ofterdingen," with which it has much in common, being a most curious medley of theosophic, metaphysical, and scientific reveries.

Novalis never lost his faith in life; even when the physicians had given him up, and death stared him in the face, he continued to busy himself with ambitious literary projects. He ate nothing but vegetables, which, according to Tieck, agreed well with him. His early love of metaphysics had now altogether deserted him. "Philosophy," he writes, "now rests on my book-shelves. I am glad that I am done with this arctic region of pure reason."

He died March 25, 1801, in the twenty-ninth year of his age. If we judge his writings by their bulk and their paradoxical character, the fame which he enjoys even at this day might seem inexplicable; but looking more closely at these *dissecta membra poetæ* we find that they possess a potent charm and even a kind of unity of their own. They reveal a quaint, lovable, and eminently poetic personality, and watching their chronological succession we may read an interesting record of psychological evolution. His early death shed a romantic halo over the incidents of his life, which were in themselves sufficiently pathetic; his works became a sacred legacy to his friends, and their author the patron saint of German Romanticism.

XIII.

LITERARY ASPECTS OF THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL

LUDWIG TIECK was born in Berlin in the year 1773, and his boyhood and youth consequently fell at a time when the *Aufklärung* was in its fullest bloom. His father was strongly influenced by the barren philosophy of the worthy Nicolai, and the school in which young Tieck received his early education was a very hot-bed of utilitarian enlightenment. But almost simultaneously the first productions of the Storm and Stress period began to attract attention. The translations of Shakespeare, Goethe's "Götz," and Schiller's "Robbers" had called into being a dramatic literature, the chief characteristic of which was strength, that is, primitively direct expressions of passion, unrefined by taste, culture, or even common decency. It was the old protest against the artificial order of society to which Rousseau had given so powerful an utterance in "Le Contrat Social" and "La Nouvelle Héloïse," and before him, in a somewhat gentler form, Bernardin de St. Pierre, in his "Paul and Virginia." But to the Teutons this protest was yet comparative-

ly new, and men like Klinger, Lenz, and the painter Müller continued in the last decades of the eighteenth century to repeat the world-old declamations about nature, deeming their approach to nature always in direct proportion to their removal from accepted propriety. The boldly unconventional character of these declamations may be fairly judged by the notorious remark of the second trooper in the third act of "Götz von Berlichingen."

A youth so sensitive as Tieck could not escape receiving a reflex tinge from a school so aggressive, and moreover so positive in its color, as the Storm and Stress; and his youthful dramas, "The Parting" and "Karl von Berneck," rival in noisy declamation and violence the works of the professed adherents of the school.

There is, in spite of beauties of detail, a horribly damp and sultry atmosphere pervading these effusions of Tieck's youthful muse; he revels in blood and atrocities of every description, and the whole imaginary scene hangs heavy as a nightmare upon the reader's vision, attracting him by an uncomfortable fascination, and compelling him to gaze at the ghastly spectacle to the bitter end; and the end is universally tragic. In "The Parting," for instance, there is hardly a single survivor. The *dramatis personæ* have apparently no power of self-determination; they are the tools of certain mysterious powers outside and above them; they go about as in a trance, murdering those who are dearest to them, and from beginning to end acting and talking in the

most irresponsible fashion. The fatalism of Greek tragedy, although entailing sorrow and suffering upon the innocent, was a clear, rational, and almost cheerful affair compared to the groping horror of these dark and unaccountable deeds.

A short drama, "Almansur," full of fatalistic philosophy and strongly tintured with Rousseau, and a long Oriental tale, "Abdallah," are monuments of precocity and industry, rather than of genius.

The work which first brought Tieck into public notice was "William Lovell," a two-volume romance, suggested by the "Paysan Perversi" of Rétif de la Bretonne. The ostensible purpose of this book is to trace the downward career of a sensitive, passionate, and uncorrupted youth. The author was then only twenty-two years old, and happily had not yet pierced to those deepest depths of human misery and sin which he is here pretending to sound. The descriptions have the vividness and oppressiveness of a fever vision. They are full of vehement rhetoric, which is a poor substitute for passion, and where the genuine vital force is lacking you cannot make up for its loss, as Tieck has attempted to do, by an excess of analysis. In "William Lovell" we are rather astounded and bewildered than really interested. The hero becomes at last too vile to deserve any sympathy, and moreover we have a haunting sense of the unreality of his crimes as well as his sufferings, and wait with calm resignation for the moment when we as well as he shall wake up to find that all these horrors were merely the vanishing-

ing phantasms of a dream. Thus in spite of all the ingenuity which the author has expended upon the outfit of his hero, the reader can hardly suppress a sigh of relief, when finally he has left Lovell dead on the Roman Campagna, where at last he reaps the fruit of his numerous misdoings.

After having spent a few years at the universities of Halle and Göttingen, where he had devoted himself with enthusiastic zeal to the study of Shakespeare and the older English dramatists, Tieck returned, in 1794, to Berlin, rented a summer-house outside of the gates, and soon gathered about him a congenial circle of admirers and friends. Among these the gentle and lovable Wackenroder has left a brief and pathetic record behind him. From their earliest school-days Tieck and he had felt drawn toward each other, and while the former rapidly developed the resources of his mind, the latter, checked in his progress by the blight of a deadly disease, clung with a touching, almost maidenly, devotion to his stronger friend, entering with ardent faith and sympathy into all his hopes of literary greatness.

In the meanwhile the ancient Nicolai, ever active and full of enterprise for the advancement of his utilitarian cause, had made the acquaintance of "William Lovell's" author, and had, with a view to mutual benefit, proposed to him a kind of literary copartnership; and Tieck, with whom the need of a market for his productions was imperative, had consented to overlook the divergence of their views and

to grind off at a fixed rate "enlightened" and instructive tales for the edification of the belletristic public of the capital. It was indeed a novel position for the future chief of Romanticism to find himself thus in the hire of the very party against which he was soon to direct the arrows of his criticism. But Tieck, conscious only of his inward wealth, and as yet unhampered by any fixed theories of art, was well content to yield to the momentary joy of creating, heedless as to the name of the cause which he indirectly served. Nicolai had for several years past been publishing a kind of treasury of novels, entitled *Ostrich Feathers* (*Strauszfedern*), mostly free adaptations of second-rate French stories, which with a slight admixture of moralizing and "enlightened sentiment" had found favor with the constituents of circulating libraries. Tieck was now intrusted with the continuation of this enterprise, and in his first efforts even exceeded the expectations of his employer. But soon his rebellious fancy refused to submit to the bondage of inferior spirits. The French models were thrown aside, and one original tale followed another with amazing rapidity. Nicolai was enchanted. The very titles of these tales show how well the fertile scribbler knew what was demanded of him; here we have, for instance, "The Sensitive Ulrich," "The Talented Farmer," "The Friend of Nature," etc. Presently, however, some playful sprite began to whisper mischievous suggestions into Tieck's ear; it would be capital sport if he could smuggle in his own sen-

timents in a sufficiently deceptive disguise, and thus beguile the old Philistine into publishing veiled satires and ridicule of himself and all his rationalistic sophistry. Nicolai ran into the snare, but at length began to suspect mischief, and the unnatural partnership came to an end. It seems, however, that the "enlightened" impetus which the Romanticist had received from his publisher must have carried him somewhat beyond his original intention; for in his next romance, "Peter Lebrecht," he still occupies the same position as in the first *Ostrich Feathers*, turns his weapons against himself, and ridicules the gratuitous horrors with which but a short time before he had regaled his readers in "William Lovell" and "Abdallah."

After all these youthful vagaries and aimless wanderings between the various literary camps, Tieck seems at last to have found his true self. That enchanted wonder-world which lies glimmering in the old German *märchens*, ballads, and folk-lore had long beckoned to him from afar, and he was now ready to cast aside all wasteful trifling and obey the call. Wackenroder had been the first to call his attention to those old, poorly-printed *Volksbücher*, with the coarse wood-cuts, which had for centuries been circulating among the peasantry, and which may still be picked up at the bookstalls of the Leipsic fairs. But Tieck was then deep in Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, and had no time to listen to nursery tales. Before long, however, Wackenroder prevailed; his friend began to look more favorably upon the old

legends, and after the reading of "St. Genevieve" and "The Children of Heymon" his enthusiasm broke into full blaze. Space will not permit me to give even a brief outline of the numerous dramatic and novelistic adaptations of the national legends with which he flooded the market and the stage during the next twenty years. Among the dramas "The Life and Death of St. Genevieve" has been accorded a foremost place, and among his many tales the preference is given to "The Blonde Eckbert," "Tannhäuser," "The Faithful Eckart," and "The Runenberg," all of which are included in the collection of "Phantasies."

Tieck's manner of treating the old stories seems to depend greatly upon the mood in which they happen to find him. Sometimes, as in "The Children of Heymon," he strives to reproduce in himself that simple primitive credulity for which no absurdity is too startling, no miracle too great for belief. It is the mood in which a nurse with an accompaniment of vivid gestures tells a child about "Jack the Giant-killer," and "Puss in Boots," and it presupposes in the child an uncritical acceptance of the most incredible statement. It was in the childhood of nations that these legends came into being, and it is to the still existing reminiscences of the primitive state that you must appeal for interest in tales of this order. Even the prosiest Philistine has some recollection of the startled wonder and delight with which he once gazed into the enchanted world of the "Arabian Nights," and, if gently and skilfully

touched, those tuneless strings may once more be made to vibrate. Tieck was such a magician, who touched the Philistine with his wand and awoke the slumbering echoes.

This primitive method, however, involved great self-abnegation on the author's part; and just at this time he longed to give vent to the enthusiasm which labored within him. Thus in his next *märchens* we detect something of the mood with which we have been made familiar in "Lovell" and "Abdallah;" the tale is now no longer its own object and end—it is merely the vehicle of some individual sentiment, mood, or passion. It is a responsive instrument, through which the poet may give utterance to his sorrow and yearning and doubt. Most clumsily and inartistically has Tieck done this in his love-story of the beautiful Magelone and the Count Peter of Provence, where the hero philosophizes over his love in a feeble lyrical strain, loses himself in rapturous contemplations of nature, sings jingling and meaningless love-songs, and strikes tragic attitudes, all in the latest improved Romantic fashion. Much better is the style of "The Runenberg" and "The Blonde Eckbert;" here Tieck is trying to find an embodiment for those unutterable emotions which are too fleeting for words, but still are more or less consciously present with all of us. These "anonymous feelings of the soul," as Novalis calls them, can be made intelligible only by being brought into action; you cannot explain them except by describing or producing that combination of circumstances which

will arouse them. That mysterious shudder which seizes one in reading these apparently harmless tales, whence does it arise if not from some half-conscious under-current of our being, to which an indefinable element in this author appeals? And here we have at last arrived at the new element in Tieck. Notice, in perusing Heine's description of these *märchens*, if you do not feel, as it were, a faint touch of that awe and mysterious intensity of which he speaks. Although of course the effect must be greatly weakened in translation, we are still conscious that something of the mystery remains. "In these tales there reigns a mysterious intensity," says Heine, "a strange intimacy with nature, especially with plants and stones. The reader feels as if he were in an enchanted forest; he listens to the melodious rush of subterranean fountains; he imagines many a time amid the whispering of the trees that he hears his own name called; the broad-leaved vines often wind themselves perilously about his feet; strange magic flowers gaze at him with their many-colored, yearning eyes; invisible lips kiss his cheeks with delusive tenderness; tall fungi like golden bells stand ringing at the foot of the trees; large, silent birds sit rocking upon the boughs and nod with their long, wise-looking bills; all is breathing, listening, shudderingly expectant; then suddenly a soft bugle is heard, and upon a white palfrey a beautiful maiden rushes past you, with waving plumes on her hat, and a falcon upon her hand. And this beautiful maiden is so very beautiful, so blond, with eyes like violets,

so smiling and still so grave, so true and still so roguish, so chaste and yet so passionate, like the fancy of our excellent Ludwig Tieck. Yes, his fancy is a gracious mediæval maiden who hunts fabulous beasts in a magic forest ; hunts, perhaps, that rare unicorn which can be caught only by a pure virgin."

This is not criticism, but it is better than criticism ; it is not negatively analytical, but conveys by a certain happy choice of adjectives some of the more positive qualities of the poet, and indeed those very qualities which are surest to escape analysis.

We fondly believe that in an enlightened age like ours, when science mercilessly penetrates to the causes of every cherished mystery, the range of the terrible is gradually reduced to a mere vanishing quantity ; but no amount of scientific reasoning can conquer the tremor which a timid person feels in a dark hall or in an empty church at midnight. The small territory of clear daylight fact which we have conquered for ourselves is on all sides surrounded by a far vaster realm of mystery, and whenever the gates are opened to this realm, our reason refuses to do our bidding, and we are on the verge of insanity. *It is on the boundary between these two realms of reason and mystery that Tieck has laid the scene of his fairy-tales ; he is perpetually setting the gates ajar, and while we dwell on situations which on the surface appear only grotesque and comical, we involuntarily shudder. He knows exactly where to touch us to find our reason weak and our sense of mystery the more active. Vulgar ghost-stories he seldom*

deals with, but frequently with those situations in which some undeniably real but unexplained psychological element overmasters the will and urges it on to deeds for which the individual is hardly himself responsible. According to Tieck, the ghost of insanity is lurking in us all, and the moment we become conscious of its presence, we are all already half-way under its sway.

Forest solitude, churchyards at midnight, ruins of convents and baronial castles, in fact all the things which we are now apt to call romantic, are the favorite haunts of Tieck's muse. It is he and his school who have the doubtful merit of having introduced all these sepulchral situations into literature; and the romanticists of other lands—Walter Scott in the British Isles, Victor Hugo in France, and Ingemann in Denmark—have enlarged the original *répertoire* until at present we are almost able to draw a distinct line between that order of natural phenomena and human emotions which is romantic and that which is not. Tieck was excessively fond of moonlight, and literally flooded his tales with its soft, dim splendor; therefore moonlight is now romantic. He never allows a hero to make a declaration of love without a near or distant accompaniment of a bugle (*Schalmei* or *Waldhorn*); accordingly, the bugle is called a romantic instrument. He showed a great preference for the Middle Ages, and revived the interest in mediæval history and literature; therefore the Middle Ages are to-day regarded as the most romantic period of history,

and their literature is *par excellence* the romantic literature ; and so on *in infinitum*.

Happily, Tieck wrote his best tales and dramas before A. T. Hoffmann, Achim von Arnim, and the other so-called late romanticists (*Spätromantiker*) had yet reduced the art of arousing sensations of horror to a system and thereby vulgarized it. In the productions belonging to his best period, at least, he refrains from those violent and purely mechanical effects which in these latter days have made the romantic name synonymous with literary clap-trap and charlatanism ; and when men of Hoffmann's and Brentano's calibre had brought the school into disrepute, he gradually withdrew from it and joined the ranks of its opponents. This argues, indeed, a considerable versatility, but also a lack of that artistic sincerity which we have a right to expect in so prominent a man of letters.

As a poet in the more specific sense of a writer of verse, Tieck holds a position peculiarly his own within the German literature. His prose writings are abundantly sprinkled with verse, some mere musical jingle, and some rare expressions of rare moods, deficient in passion, but charged with color and melody. In fact, at no time of his life does he appear to have harbored strong convictions ; he had likes and dislikes, but his hostility to one idea and his preference for another were seldom or never the results of reasoning. In his verse it is exceedingly difficult to lay hold of a single definitely expressed proposition to which you may confidently assent, or

which you may combat. The rhythmical flow of words, the cadence of the melody, the soothing, luring, coaxing, caressing concord of sweet sounds charm the ear and lull the reason into slumber. It is all so delicious, so rich, and soft, you ask nothing more. Tieck was himself well aware of these qualities in his songs, and like a genuine romanticist he immediately established the doctrine that in poetry sense should be secondary to sound. It was Wackenroder who had first caught the musical mania, and Tieck systematized his friend's dithyrambic utterances and raised them to the dignity of doctrine. The more exalted the sentiment of a poem is, the more it is apt to rise above the region where articulation is possible, and approach the disembodied, inarticulate sound. Music—i.e., inarticulate harmony—existed before the spoken language, that is, at least, Tieck's postulate; poetry is a return to primitive utterance, and appeals directly to the deepest emotions, and more by its music than by its meaning. Love, the most primitive of all emotions, has hardly any need of language.

“ Liebe denkt in süßen Tönen,
Denn Gedanken steh'n zu fern,
Nur in Tönen mag sie gern
Alles, was sie will, verschönen.
Drum ist ewig uns zugegen,
Wenn Musik mit Klängen spricht,
Ihr die Sprache nicht gebricht,
Holde Lieb' auf allen Wegen;
Liebe kann sich nicht bewegen,
Leihet sie den Athem nicht.”

Wackenroder, in the meanwhile, had begun to give vent to the fulness of his heart, not only directly through his influence on his friend, but also in independent productions. In the summer of 1796 he had with Tieck made a pilgrimage to Dresden, where the Madonnas of Raphael and Holbein had unsealed his lips and enabled him to find a fitting expression for his rapturous worship and enthusiasm. The tongue of flame had descended upon him, and he began to speak in strange languages. In his "Heart Effusions of an Art-Loving Friar" (a most discouraging title) he gives the first impetus to that extravagant Madonna-worship which, in connection with mediæval yearnings, at last assumed the phase of "artistic Catholicism," and ended with sending more than half of the prominent romanticists to the bosom of the "only saving Church." With Wackenroder this Catholic tendency sprung from a sincere, child-like faith, which willingly reposed in authority, and to which miracles were not only no stumbling-blocks, but, on the contrary, the most beautiful and most natural revelation of the divine. But it will always remain a matter of surprise that Tieck, with his "enlightened" reminiscences and his naturally sceptical temperament, could have entered with such vehemence into the religious ecstasies of his companion. Again, as in the case of his connection with Nicolai, we see him assume the cloak of another, and wear it with even more grace than the real owner. And still this ready adaptability on his part was not hypocrisy ; it

was rather that sort of æsthetic belief which enthusiastic men are very apt to contract during some period of their lives ; they desire so ardently to believe, that at length they persuade themselves that belief is theirs.

Wackenroder's religious reverence, not only for art in the abstract, but also for the individual works of art, is mirrored on every page of those of Tieck's writings which date back to this period, and especially in the romance "Sternbald's Wanderings," a book written under Wackenroder's inspiration, and as a tribute to his and the author's friendship. This "Sternbald," with the subtitle "An Old German Story," like half the romances of that day, seems a feeble echo of "Wilhelm Meister." In sentiment it is as widely removed from Goethe as the dim romantic moonlight is from the daylight of pagan, rationalistic Weimar. Nevertheless "Sternbald" could never have been if "Meister" had not been. Who knows if (like Novalis's "Ofterdingen") it was not written as a protest against the cheerful paganism of Goethe?

Franz Sternbald, a young German painter and a pupil of Albrecht Dürer, starts out from Nuremberg on his way to Italy. While wandering on he falls in with a great many people who invariably sing a song, weep, and tell him their history. An autobiographical mania seems to possess everybody ; no man thinks of withholding the deepest secrets of his heart for more than five minutes ; then usually a bugle comes in very conveniently, and either the tale or the bugle moves both parties to tears, where-

upon they sing another song and exchange opinions regarding art, the one topic with which high and low are familiar, and touching which they have ingenious theories. Everybody's birth is wrapped in mystery, which gives a charming uncertainty to the family relations of the hero and those of the poetic adventurers with whom he consorts. Unfortunately, the book was never finished, and to clear up the numerous entanglements of kinship the author is obliged to sum up the unwritten portion in an epilogue, in which he explains who were in parental and who in fraternal relations, etc., and assures the reader that in the end they were all happy.

It is difficult to read a novel of the eighteenth century without feeling what great strides we have made in that branch of writing during the last ninety years. How much more entertaining, how much truer, stronger, and more artistic is the work of those whom we call the average writers of the present day, than were those clumsily moral or lasciviously virtuous romances in which our slim-waisted grandmothers delighted! In the course of one's reading one is constantly astonished to see what an amount of space the literary histories devote to books which, if they had been written to-day, would hardly have been honored with a notice in the monthly reviews. Characterization of the kind which we find even in the minor novelists of our day is seldom attempted in these romantic extravaganzas. Everybody moves about as in a fever-dream, the most unheard-of things are continually

happening, and nobody is really responsible either for himself or for anybody else. The fact that a man determines to do something is no reason why he should do it; it is rather a reason why he should leave it undone or do the very opposite. Human will is at the mercy of mysterious powers, which thwart it, play with it, and urge it on to the most arbitrary acts. This is the tendency in most of Tieck's novels, as in those of Brentano, von Arnim, Hoffmann, and his other successors. And even at the present day the tendency survives. It is not many years since a legitimate heir of romanticism, Hermann Grimm, published a two-volume novel, entitled "Invincible Forces," in which the philosophy of the school is once more revived.

During the later years of his life Tieck lived in Dresden, where he chiefly interested himself in the affairs of the theatre. To quote Heine once more, "He who in his earlier writings had constantly satirized the court counsellors as the type of everything ridiculous became himself a royal Saxon court counsellor. The Almighty is, after all, a greater satirist than Mr. Tieck." The Napoleonic wars had devastated Germany and reduced it to a state of political nullity; therefore public men, being forbidden to interfere in public affairs, were obliged to take refuge in the imaginary world of the stage, where they could mould the destinies of nations according to their sovereign will. And Tieck, like so many others, sought this refuge. The dearest friends of his youth were dead, and the school he had helped

to found had fallen into disrepute. As early as 1798 that gentle enthusiast, Wackenroder, had ended his pathetic strivings for the ideal, to continue them where, perhaps, the ideal no longer seems so hopelessly beyond one's reach. Three years later his other bosom friend, Novalis, had quitted this life which he loved so well. Friedrich Schlegel, whose friendship Tieck had once prized so highly, had, after his many vagaries, married his Dorothea, become respectable, conservative, and a Catholic, and had established himself as a literary grand inquisitor in Vienna. There, with a cynical disregard of his past, he sued successfully for Metternich's favor, and lectured in an ultra-reactionary spirit on "The Philosophy of Life," "The Philosophy of History," and "The History of Ancient and Modern Literature." We all know that conservatism, as a mere investment, is more profitable than radicalism, and if there was a time when the choice between prosperity and martyrdom was most obviously involved in the political antithesis, it was in the days of the Holy Alliance. Friedrich Schlegel, having tasted the hardships of the desert, had now a pardonable longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt. And so he forswore all his obnoxious sentiments, ran the errands of the chief of Europe's spiritual police, and as a reward for his services was made Austrian Counsellor of Legation, and bade fair to become a dignitary of the first water. His work on "The Language and Wisdom of the Hindoos," by which he virtually made a science of comparative

philology possible, had gained him a strong position among the *savants* of the day. But just as he had turned the first bright page in the tragic history of his life, he died suddenly (1829) from the effects of roast goose, and evil tongues once more revived the scandal of his youth. To die from roast goose—what an end for an idealist!

Of the early romanticists, then, Tieck was the only survivor, unless, indeed, Augustus Wilhelm Schlegel could still be said to be alive; he who, after his various tragic marriages and his fierce warfare against the literary *coryphæi* of France, now languished in a comfortable professorship at the University of Bonn. This elder Schlegel had, with his brother Friedrich, founded *The Athenæum*, and had, through the columns of that journal, developed a great critical activity, until his quarrel with Schiller and Goethe, and his friendship for Madame de Staël, for a time removed him from the romantic arena. In spite of all the obloquy, however, which has been heaped upon him by Heine and other unscrupulous revilers, his labors are of too solid a character to be left unnoticed in a review of the school for whose advancement he worked with such indefatigable zeal. It is to him that the Germans owe their first complete translation of Shakespeare *—a translation the merit of which is not generally acknowledged. Though not enough of a poet to produce any origi-

*Schlegel translated personally only seventeen plays, and merely superintended and revised the translation of the rest.

nal work of real worth,* he had still a sufficiently tuneful ear to enable him to appreciate and to render rhythmical effects with great nicety. After having exhausted the dramatic treasures of English literature, Schlegel turned to those of Spain, and began an excellent translation of Calderon's tragedies. On all sides he opened avenues through which foreign culture could flow into the Fatherland. Friedrich Schlegel and Tieck had labored in the same direction, and it is no vain boast when the romantic school claims the merit of having widened the national horizon and enabled the German scholar of to-day to approach that cosmopolitan type of manhood which Goethe foreshadowed in the second part of his "Faust." August Wilhelm Schlegel died as professor at the University of Bonn (1845). His "Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature" (1809-1811) have been translated into many languages, and, though not free from caprices of judgment, enjoy a certain authority even at the present day.

Another member of *The Atheneum* circle, the preacher Schleiermacher, of whose personal history we have communicated some fragments, had in the year 1802 left Berlin and his Henrietta, and was seeking consolation in his Platonic studies for the privations which fate had inflicted upon him. But before retiring to his rural solitude at Stolpe, he had startled the theological world by a series of

* He was the author of a stilted and artificial classical drama named *Ion*.

literary performances which bore on their face the mark of romantic origin. His "Discourses on Religion" (1799) is a remarkable document. Each discourse is clear in spite of its abstruseness, large in its conception, and in its spirit broad and catholic. There is a healthy, warm-blooded, and broad-breasted humanity about all that Schleiermacher writes, and even if this were his only merit, it would still suffice to make him a phenomenon among theologians. As sound in sentiment he will hardly be regarded by orthodox or by freethinker. But if he errs, he does so in a large, free fashion, which wins one's heart and makes his error more lovable than the same amount of unquestioned doctrine clothed in the severe garb of the Lutheran pulpit. As soon as a chapter was finished, he sent the manuscript to Henrietta, and they criticised and discussed the contents together.

Schleiermacher's religion is chiefly an æsthetic one. "Humanity," he says, "is not the universe; it is only a single form of it, an embodiment of a single modification of its elements; . . . it is an intermediate link between the individual and God [*zwischen dem Einzelnen und dem Einen*]; a resting-place on the way to the infinite. Man would have to possess some still higher element of character than his humanity if he were to refer himself and his existence directly to the universe. This presentiment of something outside and above humanity is the object of all religion." This may, perhaps, not appear especially clear, but German

philosophy has never been remarkable for lucidity of expression. In other passages the thought, although still abstruse, is more easily seized. When, for instance, he speaks of "contemplation of the universe" as "the highest formula of religion," he has thereby felicitously expressed the passively æsthetic nature of his faith. Morality is active and finds its expression in the objective deed; religion is a pious exaltation, a state of the mind, and therefore subjective. But this universal contemplation does not only include self and pious abstractions; it embraces all humanity, and, although in itself passive, is actively fostering feelings of compassion, humility, love, gratitude, etc. These religious feelings must accompany all the deeds of man, "like sacred music;" he must do everything with religion, everything from religion. Thus in the end morality is not separable from religion; it is, however, not an aim and end, but an attendant circumstance.

Schleiermacher's object is to prove that dogmatic theology is not *per se* religion, and that religion in the higher and wider sense is not only not at variance with advanced culture, but that no real culture can exist without it. It is essentially the same position which Châteaubriand was to take in his "*Génie du Christianisme*" (1802), that much-lauded and much-abused book which suddenly made Christianity fashionable, and reconciled France (*i.e.*, Paris) to the Napoleonic Concordat. The objects of both were identical, but how different their methods!

The Gaul undertakes with much elaborate rhetoric to show that Christianity is sensuously attractive, picturesque, and poetic. The Teuton appeals to the deeper needs of the soul, and deduces religion from the fact that man is so constructed that he cannot reach the full completion of his being without it.

Friedrich Schlegel, who excelled in inventing formulas for everything, had, naturally enough, also found a formula for religion. According to him, religion is the synthesis of art and philosophy; the former strives to give an outward form to the objects in accordance with their inner being, the latter seeks to explore their inmost essence; the two united make religion. "Religion," he says again, "is the all-animating universal soul of culture. Only he can be an artist who has a religion of his own, who has an original view of the infinite. . . . The only opposition which we may expect to the everywhere germinating religion will come from *the few real Christians still remaining.*"

In sharp contrast to this, Schleiermacher maintains that Christianity in its spirit, independent of the dogmatic differences of sects, alone can satisfy the cultivated intellect as well as the deeper, more primitive needs of the human heart. Châteaubriand had emphatically declared Christianity to mean Catholicism; Schleiermacher ignored sectarian partisanship, and strove to rise above the letter, which killeth, strove to find the spirit, which giveth life.

Schlegel very naturally felt dissatisfied with the

position of his friend ; he felt that they were divided, and he expressed in a sonnet his judgment of his solution of the religious problem ; Schleiermacher stands at the door of a stately temple of wondrous beauty ; he opens the door ; a solemn, sacred symphony fills the air with sweet, soul-stirring sound ; a curtain is drawn aside, and behold, the old Sphinx. The riddle is still unsolved.

And it may be well that neither Schleiermacher nor anyone else has as yet definitely solved the riddle. In the strife and infinite divergence fostered by our aspiration for truth lies our surest promise of spiritual progress. The romantic school, through its various representatives, strove to reclaim a nation which was thought to be drifting into artistic paganism. Through Tieck, Wackenroder, and Novalis it introduced Christianity into literature ; through Schleiermacher it endeavored to humanize religion. And even if the truth which these men saw was more than half error, they still labored bravely, and surely have not lived in vain.

Except as regards its impatience with what is called the prose of life and a reactionary tendency which exalts the past over the present, German romanticism has few features in common with the group of authors which in England and France we are accustomed to style romantic. If we include Byron in the school, of which Scott is the most illustrious name, a general characterization becomes still more difficult ; for Byron, though there was a deposit of feudal sentiment in his mind, professed

the most radical opinions and posed as the champion of liberty. However, as it is a question whether he took himself seriously, and, moreover, as most of his sentiments were held for their picturesqueness, his refusal to conform to our classification need not disturb us. As a radical romanticist, or a romantic radical, he is the solitary instance of any note that English literary history records. He had, to be sure, imitators in other lands who endeavored to combine his libertinism, his world-woe, and his Promethean defiance of authority. Alfred de Musset, who is usually regarded as Byron's counterpart in France, exhibits but a faint resemblance, and Pushkin in Russia is likewise a somewhat feeble copy. Victor Hugo, the leader of the French romanticists, managed also to combine an advanced radicalism in politics with a literary mediævalism, and represents a new modification of the romantic physiognomy. His "Notre Dame de Paris" is a perfect museum of mediæval sentiments and feudal antiquities, while his "Légende des Siècles" with the trumpet-note of prophecy heralds the dawn of a new age that is already flushing the horizon of the dying century. But though romanticism, as a convenient name, has been attached to the school of which he was the founder, the national transformation which the term undergoes in crossing the Rhine is so great as to endanger its identity. There is, as it appears to us, but one fundamental note which all romanticism, whether it be radical or reactionary, has in common, and that is a deep disgust with the

world as it is and a desire to depict in literature something that is claimed to be nobler and better.

- (The German romanticists, because they found the reality which surrounded them highly unpoetic, turned toward the Middle Ages and believed that they had there found the lost paradise of poets. The French romanticists, being equally discontented with the present, resolved to improve it. Instead of holding up a lost ideal for contemplation, several of them entered, like Victor Hugo, upon a public career, protested against usurpation, and suffered exile and persecution in their endeavors to remould reality in accordance with the fervid visions of their souls. It is, after all, a question of national temperament whether romanticism assumes the form of a poetic regret and passive retrospection, or an active revolt against the hard prose represented by kings and governments.

A further modifying circumstance which is apt to confuse the reader is the fact that romanticism not only means different things in different countries, but it means different things at different times, in accordance with the school or tendency with which it comes into collision. In Germany it was, as we have seen, on the one hand, the utilitarianism of the period and enlightenment which drove the school into an idealism, scorning all the servile morality of the Philistine ; and, on the other hand, it was the pagan classicism of Goethe and Schiller which impelled it, by the impetus of opposition, toward patriotism, mediæval enthusiasm, and Catholicism.

In modern times romanticism, typifying a permanent tendency of the human mind, has been placed in opposition to what is called realism, and has thereby undergone a fresh modification. If realism means insistence upon a life-like art, based upon experience, true to the logic and beating with the pulse-beat of reality, romanticism, in its latest combative attitude, has no choice but to mean sovereign art, dwelling in an ideal realm of fancy, scorning subserviency to the truth of life. Such a tendency we see exemplified in the brilliant caricature of Dickens, the lurid and unwholesome fictions of Wilkie Collins, and the mediæval heroic juveniles of Robert Louis Stevenson.

But in making up the final account, let us not wink at the fact that this perennial quarrel involves a question of degree rather than of kind. No art can reproduce life with absolute fidelity, nor is it desirable that it should. A vast deal must be omitted in the novel, which, for instance, a painter would be obliged to depict. The painter, making the same selection of essentials, would omit much which a photograph would reproduce, and the photograph, in its inability to render color and the minutest detail, would omit much which a naturalist would discover. If the novelist, in describing a scene, were to insist upon rendering everything, accidentals as well as essentials, with the fidelity of a photograph, he would produce a jumbled and meaningless chapter and be unfaithful because of over-fidelity. But to the laws of life, in so far as they are ascertainable—the logic

of its sequence and development—he must adhere with the utmost fidelity that he can command.

But, as we have endeavored to point out in the essay on "The Evolution of the German Novel," the intellectual progress of the world asserts itself in a progressive demand for verisimilitude in the arts. The childlike wonder-loving epics and legends of the Middle Ages reflected as truly the intellectual condition of the "cultivated classes" of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as Tolstoi, Howells, and James represent the vanguard of culture to-day. The romantic rear-guard is represented by the lovers of Dickens, Scott, Victor Hugo, and Stevenson. There will always be those who pander to the crude delight in marvels, and there will always be people ready to consume their wares. But let not these people fancy that their delight in these modified fairy tales is an intellectual enjoyment which argues "literary tastes." It was not suspected, even a hundred years ago, except in the most general way, how human fates were determined by heredity and environment; and the romances of that day were therefore excusable for a degree of arbitrariness which in a novelist of to-day would be unpardonable. A higher degree of fidelity, a deeper inward truth, as regards motives, impulses, causes, and effects, is demanded by realism; while romanticism (using nature as a painter does his colors, for purposes of mixture and arbitrary composition) gives yet a tolerably free rein to fancy and refuses allegiance to the logic of life.

2



ESSAYS

*LITERARY, SOCIAL, HISTORICAL,
MUSICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL,
DRAMATIC, POLITICAL*

BY

STEVENSON	CARLYLE
SIR E. ARNOLD	FROUDE
BIRRELL	GLADSTONE
LANG	HENLEY
HOLLAND	IK MARVEL
H. ADAMS	MATTHEWS
BROWNELL	BOYSEN
R. GRANT	FINCK
MAX MULLER	LANIER
GEORGE MOORE	T. N. PAGE

AND OTHERS

Charles Scribner's Sons, Publishers

743-745 Broadway, New York

►►►►►►►►►► **LIST OF VOLUMES OF**
ESSAYS ON LITERATURE, ART,
MUSIC, ETC., PUBLISHED BY
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, 743-745
BROADWAY, NEW YORK. ◄◄◄◄◄◄◄◄

HENRY ADAMS.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS. (12mo, \$2.00.)

CONTENTS: Primitive Rights of Women—Captaine John Smith—Harvard College, 1786-1787—Napoleon I. at St. Domingo—The Bank of England Restriction—The Declaration of Paris, 1861—The Legal Tender Act—The New York Gold Conspiracy—The Session, 1869-1870.

"Mr. Adams is thorough in research, exact in statement, judicial in tone, broad of view, picturesque and impressive in description, nervous and expressive in style. His characterizations are terse, pointed, clear."—*New York Tribune*.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

JAPONICA. Illustrated by Robert Blum. (Large 8vo, \$3.00.)

"Artistic and handsome. In theme, style, illustrations and manufacture, it will appeal to every refined taste, presenting a most thoughtful and graceful study of the fascinating people among whom the author spent a year."—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

OBITER DICTA, First Series. (16mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Carlyle—On the Alleged Obscurity of Mr. Browning's Poetry—Truth Hunting—Actors—A Rogue's Memoirs—The Via Media—Falstaff.

"Some admirably written essays, amusing and brilliant. The book is the work of a highly cultivated man, with a real gift of expression, a good deal of humor, a happy fancy."—*Spectator*.

OBITER DICTA, Second Series. (16mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Milton—Pope—Johnson—Burke—The Muse of History—Lamb—Emerson—The Office of Literature—Worn Out Types—Cambridge and the Poets—Book-buying.

"Neat, apposite, clever, full of quaint allusions, happy thoughts, and apt, unfamiliar quotations."—*Boston Advertiser*.

Prof. H. H. BOYESEN.

ESSAYS ON GERMAN LITERATURE. (12mo, \$1.50.)

CONTENTS : The Life and Works of Goethe—Goethe and Carlyle—The English Estimate of Goethe—Some English Translations of Goethe—Sermons from Goethe (1) The Problem of Happiness ; (2) The Victims of Progress—Goethe in his Relations to Women—The Life and Works of Schiller—Evolution of the German Novel—Studies of the German Novel—Carmen Sylva—The Romantic School in Germany.

W. C. BROWNELL.

FRENCH TRAITS. An Essay in Comparative Criticism. (12mo, \$1.50.)

CONTENTS : The Social Instinct—Morality—Intelligence—Sense and Sentiment—Manners—Women—The Art Instinct—The Provincial Spirit—Democracy—New York after Paris.

"These chapters form a volume of criticism which is sympathetic, intelligent, acute, and contains a great amount of wholesome suggestion. The comparison, always either implied or expressed, is between France and the United States."

—*Boston Advertiser.*

THOMAS CARLYLE.

LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE. (Now printed for the first time. 12mo, \$1.00. Copyrighted.)

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS : Literature in General—Language, Tradition—The Greeks—The Heroic Ages—Homer—Æschylus to Socrates—The Romans—Middle Ages—Christianity—The Crusades—Dante—The Spaniards—Chivalry—Cervantes—The Germans—Luther—The Origin, Work and Destiny of the English—Shakespeare—Milton—Swift—Hume—Wertherism—The French Revolution—Goethe and his Works.

"Every intelligent American reader will instantly wish to read this book through, and many will say that it is the clearest and wisest and most genuine book that Carlyle ever produced. We could have no work from his hand which embodies more clearly and emphatically his literary opinions than his rapid and graphic survey of the great writers and great literary epochs of the world."

—*Boston Herald.*

4 *SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS.*

ALICE MORSE EARLE.

THE SABBATH IN PURITAN NEW ENGLAND.
(12mo, \$1.25.)

CONTENTS: The Church Militant—Seating the Meeting—The Length of the Service—The Icy Temperature—The Noon-House—The Deacon's Office—The Church Music—Interruptions of the Service—Authority of the Church and the Ministers—Ordination of the Ministers—The Minister's Pay—etc., etc.

"She writes with a keen sense of humor, and out of the full stores of adequate knowledge and plentiful explorations among old pamphlets, letters, sermons, and that treasury, not yet run dry in New England, family traditions. The book is as sympathetic as it is bright and humorous."—*The Independent*.

HENRY T. FINCK.

CHOPIN, and Other Musical Essays. 12mo,
\$1.50.)

CONTENTS: Chopin, the Greatest Genius of the Pianoforte—How Composers Work—Schumann as Mirrored in his Letters—Music and Morals—Italian and German Vocal Styles—German Opera in New York.

"Written from abundant knowledge; enlivened by anecdote and touches of enthusiasm, suggestive, stimulating."—*Boston Post*.

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

**THE SPANISH STORY OF THE ARMADA, AND
OTHER ESSAYS, HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE.**
(12mo. *In Press*.)

CONTENTS: The Spanish Story of the Armada—Antonio Perez: An Unresolved Historical Riddle—Saint Teresa—The Templars—The Norway Fjords—Norway Once More.

SHORT STUDIES ON GREAT SUBJECTS. (Half
leather, 12mo, 4 vols., each \$1.50.)

CONTENTS:

VOL. I. The Science of History—Times of Erasmus and Luther—The Influence of the Reformation on the Scottish Character—The Philosophy of Catholicism—A Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties—Criticism and the

Gospel History—The Book of Job—Spinoza—The Dissolution of Monasteries—England's Forgotten Worthies—Homer—The Lives of the Saints—Representative Man—Reynard the Fox—The Cat's Pilgrimage—Fables—Parable of the Bread-fruit Tree—Compensation.

VOL. II. Calvinism—A Bishop of the Twelfth Century—Father Newman on "The Grammar of Assent"—Conditions and Prospects of Protestantism—England and Her Colonies—A Fortnight in Kerry—Reciprocal Duties in State and Subject—The Merchant and His Wife—On Progress—The Colonies Once More—Education—England's War—The Eastern Question—Scientific Method Applied to History.

VOL. III. Annals of an English Abbey—Revival of Romanism—Sea Studies—Society in Italy in the Last Days of the Roman Republic—Lucian—Divus Caesar—On the Uses of a Landed Gentry—Party Politics—Leaves from a South African Journal.

VOL. IV. The Oxford Counter—Reformation—Life and Times of Thomas Becket—Origen and Celsus—A Cagliostro of the Second Century—Cheneys and the House of Russell—A Siding at a Railway Station.

"All the papers here collected are marked by the qualities which have made Mr. Froude the most popular of living English historians—by skill in argumentative and rhetorical exposition, by felicities of diction, by contagious earnestness, and by the rare power of fusing the results of research in the imagination so as to produce a picture of the past at once exact and vivid."

—*N. Y. Sun.*

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

GLEANINGS OF PAST YEARS, 1843-1879. (7 vols., 16mo, each \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Vol. I., The Throne and the Prince Consort. The Cabinet and Constitution—Vol. II., Personal and Literary—Vol. III., Historical and Speculative—Vol. IV., Foreign—Vol. V. and VI., Ecclesiastical—Vol. VII., Miscellaneous.

"Not only do these essays cover a long period of time, they also exhibit a very wide range of intellectual effort. Perhaps their most striking feature is the breadth of genuine intellectual sympathy, of which they afford such abundant evidence,"—*Nation*.

ROBERT GRANT.

THE REFLECTIONS OF A MARRIED MAN. (12mo, cloth, \$1.00; paper, 50 cents.)

A delicious vein of humor runs through this new book by the author of "The Confessions of a Frivolous Girl," who takes the reader into his confidence and gives a picture of married life that is as bright and entertaining as it is amusing. The experiences described are so typical, that it is singular that they have never got into print before.

E. J. HARDY.

THE BUSINESS OF LIFE: A Book for Everyone.
—HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED: Being
a Handbook to Marriage—THE FIVE TALENTS OF
WOMAN: A Book for Girls and Women—
MANNERS MAKETH MAN. (Each, 12mo, \$1.25.)

"The author has a large store of apposite quotations and anecdotes from which he draws with a lavish hand, and he has the art of brightening his pages with a constant play of humor that makes what he says uniformly entertaining."—*Boston Advertiser*.

W. E. HENLEY.

VIEWS AND REVIEWS. Essays in Appreciation:
Literature. (12mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Dickens—Thackeray—Disraeli—Dumas—Meredith—Byron—Hugo—Heine—Arnold—Rabelais—Shakespeare—Sidney—Walton—Banville—Berlioz—Longfellow—Balzac—Hood—Lever—Congreve—Tolstoi—Fielding, etc., etc.

"Interesting, original, keen and felicitous. His criticism will be found suggestive, cultivated, independent."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

J. G. HOLLAND.

TITCOMB'S LETTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE, SINGLE
AND MARRIED—GOLD-FOIL, HAMMERED FROM
POPULAR PROVERBS—LESSONS IN LIFE: A Series
of Familiar Essays—CONCERNING THE JONES
FAMILY—PLAIN TALKS ON FAMILIAR SUBJECTS—

SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS. 7

EVERY-DAY TOPICS, First Series, Second Series.
(Each, small 12mo, \$1.25.)

"Dr. Holland will always find a congenial audience in the homes of culture and refinement. He does not affect the play of the darker and fiercer passions, but delights in the sweet images that cluster around the domestic hearth. He cherishes a strong fellow-feeling with the pure and tranquil life in the modest social circles of the American people, and has thus won his way to the companionship of many friendly hearts."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

WILLIAM RALPH INGE.

SOCIETY IN ROME UNDER THE CÆSARS. (12mo,
\$1.25.)

"Every page is brimful of interest. The pictures of life in Rome under the Cæsars are graphic and thoroughly intelligible."
—*Chicago Herald*.

ANDREW LANG.

ESSAYS IN LITTLE. (Portrait, 12mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Alexandre Dumas—Mr. Stevenson's Works—Thomas Haynes Bayly—Theodore de Banville—Homer and the Study of Greek—The Last Fashionable Novel—Thackeray—Dickens—Adventures of Buccaneers—The Sagas—Kingsley—Lever—Poems of Sir Walter Scott—Bunyan—Letter to a Young Journalist—Kipling's Stories.

"One of the most entertaining and bracing of books. It ought to win every vote and please every class of readers."
—*Spectator* (London).

LETTERS TO DEAD AUTHORS. (16mo, \$1.00.)

Letters to Thackeray—Dickens—Herodotus—Pope—Rabelais—Jane Austen—Isaak Walton—Dumas—Theocritus—Poe—Scott—Shelley—Molière—Burns, etc., etc.

"The book is one of the luxuries of the literary taste. It is meant for the exquisite palate, and is prepared by one of the 'knowing' kind. It is an astonishing little volume,"—*N. Y. Evening Post*.

SIDNEY LANIER.

THE ENGLISH NOVEL AND THE PRINCIPLE OF
ITS DEVELOPMENT. (Crown 8vo, \$2.00.)

"The critical and analytical portions of his work are always in high key, suggestive, brilliant, rather dogmatic and not free from caprice. . . . But when all these abatements are made, the lectures remain lofty in tone and full of original inspiration."
—*Independent*.

8 *SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS.*

THE SCIENCE OF ENGLISH VERSE. (Crown, 8vo,
\$2.00.)

"It contains much sound practical advice to the makers of verse. The work shows extensive reading and a refined taste both in poetry and in music."—*Nation*.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.

FRENCH DRAMATISTS OF THE 19TH CENTURY
(New Edition, 8vo, \$1.50.)

CONTENTS : Chronology—The Romantic Movement—Hugo—Dumas—Scribe—Augier—Dumas *fils*—Sardou—Feuillet—Labiche—Meilhac and Halévy—Zola and the Tendencies of French Drama—A Ten Years' Retrospect : 1881–1891.

"Mr. Matthews writes with authority of the French stage. Probably no other writer of English has a larger acquaintance with the subject than he. His style is easy and graceful, and the book is delightful reading."—*N. Y. Times*.

THE THEATRES OF PARIS. (Illustrated, 16mo,
\$1.25.)

"An interesting, gossip, yet instructive little book."
—*Academy* (London).

DONALD G. MITCHELL.

ENGLISH LANDS, LETTERS AND KINGS. Vol. I.,
From Celt to Tudor. Vol. II., From Elizabeth
to Anne. (Each, 12mo, \$1.50.)

"Crisp, sparkling, delicate, these brief talks about authors, great and small, about kings and queens, schoolmasters and people, whet the taste for more. In 'Ik Marvel's' racy, sweet, delightful prose, we see the benefits of English literature assimilated."—*Literary World*.

REVERIES OF A BACHELOR ; or, A Book of the
Heart—DREAM LIFE: A Fable of the Seasons.
(Cameo Edition, each, with etching, 16mo,
\$1.25.)

"Beautiful examples of the art [of book making]. The vein of sentiment in the text is one of which youth never tires."
—*The Nation*.

SEVEN STORIES WITH BASEMENT AND ATTIC—
WET DAYS AT EDGEWOOD, with Old Farmers,
Old Gardeners and Old Pastorals—BOUND

SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS. 9

TOGETHER, A Sheaf of Papers—OUT-OF-TOWN PALACES, with Hints for their Improvement—MY FARM OF EDGEWOOD, A Country Book. (Each, 12mo, \$1.25.)

"No American writer since the days of Washington Irving uses the English language as does 'Ik Marvel.' His books are as natural as spring flowers, and as refreshing as summer rains."
—*Boston Transcript*.

GEORGE MOORE.

IMPRESSIONS AND OPINIONS. (12mo, \$1.25.)

CONTENTS: Balzac—Turgueneff—"Le Rêve"—Two Unknown Poets—An Actress of the 18th Century—Mummer Worship—Our Dramatists and their Literature—Note on "Ghosts"—On the Necessity of a Theatre Libre—Meissonier and the Salon Julian—Art for the Villa—Degas, etc., etc.

"Both instructive and entertaining . . . still more interesting is the problem of an English *Théâtre Libre*, of which Mr. Moore is an ingenious advocate. The four concluding essays, which treat of art and artists, are all excellent."
—*Saturday Review* (London).

F. MAX MÜLLER.

CHIPS FROM A GERMAN WORKSHOP. Vol. I., Essays on the Science of Religion—Vol. II., Essays on Mythology, Traditions and Customs—Vol. III., Essays on Literature, Biographies and Antiquities—Vol. IV., Comparative Philology, Mythology, etc.—Vol. V., On Freedom, etc. (5 vols., each, crown 8vo, \$2.00.)

"These books afford no end of interesting extracts; 'chips' by the cord, that are full both to the intellect and the imagination; but we must refer the curious reader to the volumes themselves. He will find in them a body of combined entertainment and instruction such as has hardly ever been brought together in so compact a form."—*N. Y. Evening Post*.

BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS. (Crown 8vo, \$2.00.)

CONTENTS: Rāmmohun Roy—Keshub Chunder Sen—Dayananda Sarasvati—Bunjiu Nanjio—Kenjiu Kasawara—Mohl—Kingsley.

"Max Müller is the leading authority of the world in Hindoo literature, and his volume on Oriental reformers will be acceptable to scholars and literary people of all classes."—*Chicago Tribune*.

THOMAS NELSON PAGE.

THE OLD SOUTH, ESSAYS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL.
(12mo. *In Press.*)

CONTENTS : The Old South—Authorship in the South before the War—Life in Colonial Virginia—Social Life in the South before the War—Old Yorktown—The Old Virginia Lawyer—The South's Need of a History—The Negro Question.

These essays reveal a new and charming side of Mr. Page's versatility. He knows his Virginia as Lowell knew his New England.

AUSTIN PHELPS, D.D.

MY NOTE-BOOK: Fragmentary Studies in Theology and Subjects Adjacent Thereto (12mo, \$1.50)—MEN AND BOOKS; or, Studies in Homiletics (8vo, \$2.00)—MY PORTFOLIO (12mo, \$1.50)—MY STUDY, AND OTHER ESSAYS (12mo, \$1.50).

"His great and varied learning, his wide outlook, his profound sympathy with concrete men and women, the lucidity and beauty of his style, and the fertility of his thought, will secure for him a place among the great men of American Congregationalism."

—*N. Y. Tribune.*

NOAH PORTER, LL.D.

BOOKS AND READING. (Crown 8vo, \$2.00).

"It is distinguished by all the rare acumen, discriminating taste and extensive literary knowledge of the author. The chief departments of literature are reviewed in detail."—*N. Y. Times.*

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.

LITERATURE AND POETRY. (With portrait, 8vo, \$3.00.)

CONTENTS : Studies on the English Language—The Poetry of the Bible—Dies Irae—Stabat Mater—Hymns of St. Bernard—The University, Ancient and Modern—Dante Alighieri, The Divina Commedia.

"There is a great amount of erudition in the collection, but the style is so simple and direct that the reader does not realize that he is following the travels of a close scholar through many learned volumes in many different languages."—*Chautauquan.*

SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS. II

EDMOND SCHERER.

ESSAYS ON ENGLISH LITERATURE. (With Portrait, 12mo, \$1.50.)

CONTENTS: George Eliot (three essays)—J. S. Mill—Shakespeare—Taine's History of English Literature—Shakespeare and Criticism—Milton and "Paradise Lost"—Laurence Sterne, or the Humorist—Wordsworth—Carlyle—"Endymion."

"M. Scherer had a number of great qualities, mental and moral which rendered him a critic of English literature, in particular, whose views and opinions have not only novelty and freshness, but illumination and instruction for English readers, accustomed to conventional estimates from the English stand-point."

—*Literary World.*

WILLIAM G. T. SHEDD, D.D.

LITERARY ESSAYS. (8vo, \$2.50.)

"They bear the marks of the author's scholarship, dignity and polish of style, and profound and severe convictions of truth and righteousness as the basis of culture as well as character."

—*Chicago Interior.*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

ACROSS THE PLAINS, WITH OTHER ESSAYS AND MEMORIES. (12mo, \$1.25.)

CONTENTS: Across the Plains: Leaves from the Notebook of an Emigrant between New York and San Francisco—The Old Pacific Capital—Fontainebleau: Village Communities of Painters—Epilogue to an Inland Voyage—Contribution to the History of Life—Education of an Engineer—The Lantern Bearers—Dreams—Beggars—Letter to a Young Man proposing to Embrace a Literary Life—A Christmas Sermon.

MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS. (12mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS: Some College Memories—A College Magazine—An Old Scotch Gardener—Memoirs of an Islet—Thomas Stevenson—Talk and Talkers—The Character of Dogs—A Gossip on a Novel of Dumas—A Gossip on Romance—A Humble Remonstrance.

12 *SELECTED VOLUMES OF ESSAYS.*

VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE, and Other Papers.
(12mo, \$1.00.)

CONTENTS : Virginibus Puerisque—Crabbed Age and Youth—An Apology for Idlers—Ordered South—Aes Triplex—El Dorado—The English Admirals—Some Portraits by Raeburn—Child's Play—Walking Tours—Pan's Pipes—A Plea for Gas Lamps.

FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS. (12mo, \$1.25.)

CONTENTS : Victor Hugo's Romances—Some Aspects of Robert Burns—Walt Whitman—Henry David Thoreau—Yoshida-Thorajiro—François Villon—Charles of Orleans—Samuel Pepys—John Knox and Women.

"If there are among our readers any lover of good books to whom Mr. Stevenson is still a stranger, we may advise them to make his acquaintance through either of these collections of essays. The papers are full of the rare individual charm which gives a distinction to the highest products of his art and fancy. He is a notable writer of good English, who combines in a manner altogether his own the flexibility, freedom, quickness and suggestiveness of contemporary fashions with a grace, dignity, and high-breeding that belong rather to the past."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

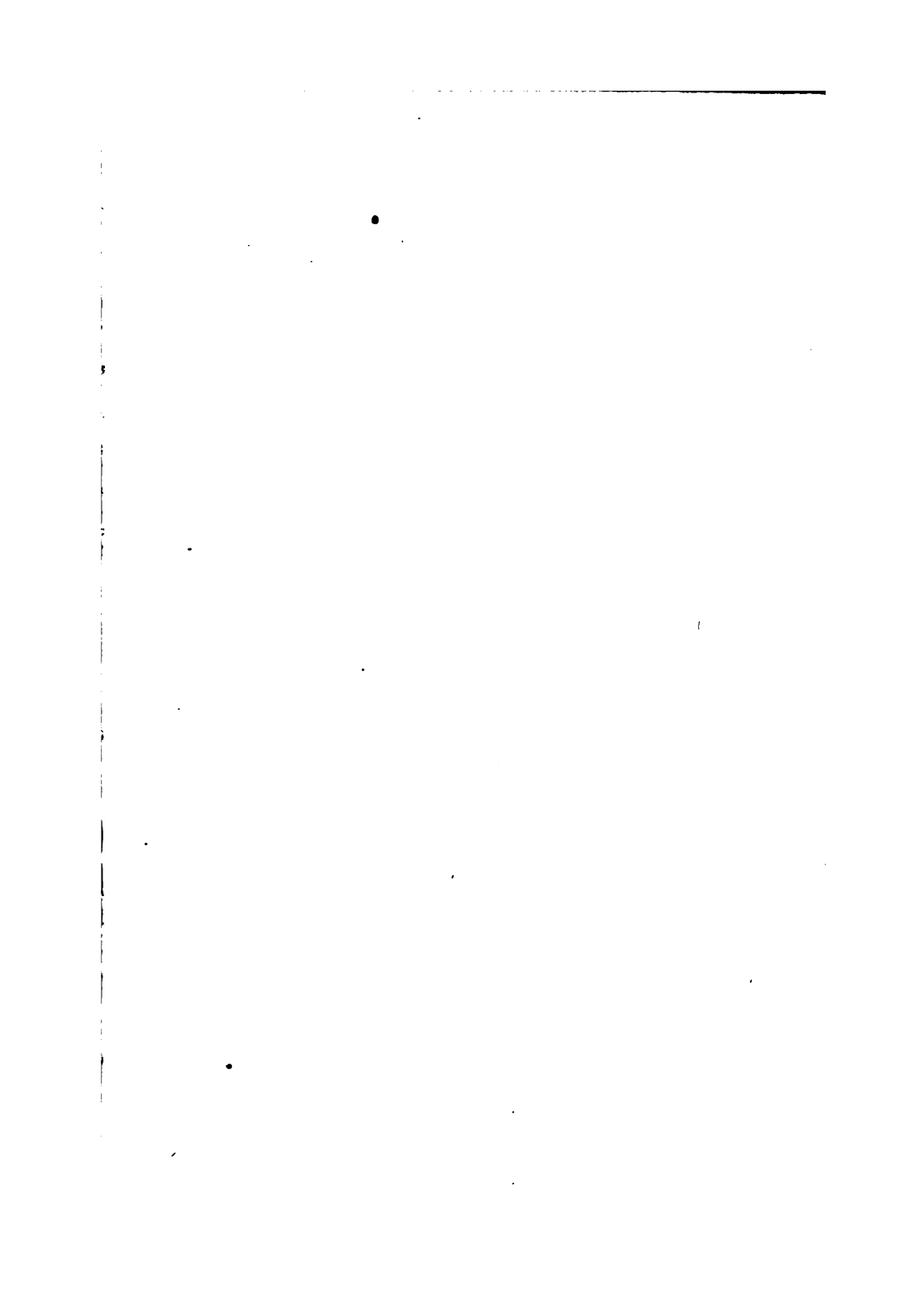
HENRY VAN DYKE, D.D.

THE POETRY OF TENNYSON. (*New and Enlarged Edition.* With Portrait, 12mo, \$2.00.)

CONTENTS : Tennyson's First Flight—The Palace of Art : Milton and Tennyson—Two Splendid Failures—The Idylls of the King—The Historic Trilogy—The Bible in Tennyson—Fruit from an Old Tree—On the Study of Tennyson—Chronology—List of Biblical Quotations.

"The two new chapters and the additional chronological matter have greatly enriched the work."—T. B. ALDRICH.

————— THE FOREGOING VOLUMES OF
ESSAYS ARE FOR SALE BY ALL BOOKSELLERS, OR
WILL BE SENT POSTPAID, ON RECEIPT OF PRICE,
BY THE PUBLISHERS, CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS,
743-745 BROADWAY, NEW YORK. —————



•

